RIMUALDO:

OR,

THE CASTLE OF BADAJOS.

A ROMANCE.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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RIMUALDO.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFO ... L.

CHAP. I.

And doſt thou bear him yet, thou patient earth?
Doſt thou not labour with his murd'rous weight?
And you, ye glittering heav'nly hoſt of ſtars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or he will blaſt you;
For he is all contagion, death, and ruin,
And Nature ſickens at him. ROWE.

What means that ghaſtly look?
Haſt thou the furies ſeen? Why ſtand'ſt thou ſpeechleſs?
What means that deep-fetch'd groan? Why does deſpair
Stare thro' thy haggard eyes? DENHAM.

CESARIO continued immerſed in deepeſt thought, while the carriage moved on with the utmoſt rapidity. The mantling robe of night curtained every ob-

ject from the view, ee'n heaven's bright gems forgot their wonted influence, nor ſhot one gleamy ray athwart the gloom; no ſound was heard but the continued rumbling of the wheels; for the companions of Ceſario's journey maintained a ſilence, ſullen as the aſpect of the night.

"Why ſhould I yield to fear?" internally exclaimed Ceſario, "ſince death, "the terminator of all woes, is the worſt "that can befall me. No, I will rouſe "the dormant energies of my ſoul, I "will act as befits the ſon of conſcious "integrity; the tranſient frowns of fate "never ſhall warp my mind, nor blanch "the manly ruby of my cheek. Come, "Virtue, let thy mantle ſhield my ſoul; "adverſity is man's attendant here be-"low; then why repine at heaven's "decree? why ſhun the checkers that "await this ſublunary courſe? I will "henceforth boldly face each threatened "ill;

"ill; fortitude ſhall nerve me, and "bleſſed religion teach me reſigna-"tion."

At break of day the carriage quitting the direct road, ſtruck into a narrow track, rendered almoſt impaſſable by its narrowneſs, and the deſolation that marked it. After advancing ſlowly for a conſiderable length of time the vehicle entered a gloomy wood, whoſe ſpreading arms almoſt totally obſcured the early matin rays that beamed above the eaſtern horizon. For the ſpace of an hour the drivers continued to wind along this narrow track, and halted at length before the entrance of a ſmall building, which had apparently been erected for the aſylum of the former huntſmen of the foreſt. It was now uninhabited and mouldering to decay.

The two companions of Ceſario's journey alighting from the carriage, held

ſome conference for a few moments, and then advancing to the door of the building, one of them drew forth a key, and unlocking the portal entered, while the other returning to the door of the carriage in a ſullen tone of voice bad Ceſario alight. The youth obeyed, and followed the ruffian, who immediately proceeded to the habitation. As they paſſed the threſhold the door was cloſed, and Ceſario ordered to mount the mutilated ſtairs which led to ſeveral chambers above, bearing the appearance of deſolation. Into one of theſe Ceſario's conductor entered, whither he was followed by the youth, and ſhortly after appeared the ſecond deſperado bearing ſome proviſions in a wicker baſket, which he placed upon the table, and after motioning Ceſario to eat, advanced to the windows; theſe he examined carefully, and then retired from the chamber followed by his companion, who having cautiouſly

cautiouſly barricaded the door on the outſide, deſcended muttering ſome unintelligible words to the partner of his villany. Ceſario liſtened attentively, but in a few ſeconds the retiring echo of their footſteps died away; he then traverſed the apartment awhile yielding to the various conjectures which involuntarily aroſe in his breaſt, concerning the myſterious conduct of his conductors, and the cauſe of their preſent halt in this ſequeſtered ſpot; at length he bent his ſteps towards the window, but the motions of the drivers or their employers was not perceivable, as the caſements were in a different angle of the building to that before which the carriage had halted.

The golden radiance of the riſing ſun juſt darted through the leaf-clad branches of the foreſt, and diſpelled the humid miſt of early dawn; Ceſario

gazed awhile upon the lofty trees waved by the paffing wind, and watched the lively motions of the feathered choir; their joyful melody entranced his thoughts, and filled his breaft with inexpreffible delight. After having fully contemplated this tranquil fcene, he feated himfelf, and with a grateful heart partook of the refrefhment which exhaufted nature fo much required.

The time dragged heavily on, and fome hours elapfed without the intrufion of his conductors; neither did any found break upon his ear, fave the ruftling of the leafy foreft and the varied notes of the woodland tribe. "What means "this unaccountable conduct?" faid Cefario mentally; "what can be the "intention of the ruffians that feized "me? am I to be left a prifoner in "this fequeftered fpot, or am I to yield "myfelf to fleep, and at the filent hour "of

" of midnight die by the murderer's " ſteel."

Ceſario ſhuddered at the thoughts and raiſing his eyes to heaven, offered a ſilent ejaculation to the Father of Nature.

The ſloping rays of the ſun beſpoke the approach of evening, and ſtill the ſame uninterrupted ſilence reigned around. Ceſario quitted his ſeat and traverſing the apartment with irregular ſtep, felt a perturbation gradually ſteal over his heart; he once more advanced to the caſement, a warm glow tinged the waving foreſt, the ſongſters were retired, and the ſound of the evening wind breathed mournfully through the trees. An hour elapſed, a ſecond intervened, and twilight began to ſpread its miſty veil around each object. A ſecret horror ſuddenly ſtruck the youth, and he would have experienced joy even

at beholding the very objects by whose wily arts he had been ensnared, apparently to ruin, and perhaps destruction. As his terrors increased, he sometimes traversed the chamber with hasty strides, at others paused and listened to catch every passing sound; Cesario had stopped in front of one the casements, when a male form seemed to glide beneath the shade of the wood; he advanced on the instant, and shortly after three persons emerged from the gloom of the forest and inclined their course towards the mansion.

He observed them minutely, but so far was twilight advanced as to incapacitate him from recollecting the persons of either of the strangers. They halted at length, and after apparently conversing together for some minutes, one of them returned into the wood while the other two with hasty step approached the

the dwelling. Cefario prefently diftinguifhed footfteps beneath, and as the perfons afcended the ftaircafe, the rattling of carriage wheels was alfo heard. In a few feconds the door of the apartment was unbarred, and the two conductors of the youth advanced into the chamber.

" Senor," faid the foremoft in a harfh tone, " you muft inftantly refume your " journey, the carriage waits and we " are ready to attend you."

" Whither would ye conduct me?" inquired the youth emphatically, " who " is your employer? Is it my life you " feek?"

" Follow in filence," refumed the fame ruffian that had before addreffed the youth, " for interrogatories are but

" fruitlefs, and to refift our will would
" be vain."

Without awaiting Cefario's reply, he inftantly led the way: having paffed the portal of the manfion which was again fecured, they followed Cefario into the carriage, which proceeded forward with as much celerity as the ruggednefs of the road would admit. For feveral hours they travelled, during which period the fame determined filence as before marked the conduct of his conductors; Cefario at length conjectured that night muft be almoft fpent, and looked forward with a degree of fatisfaction to the return of day. While yielding to this pleafurable fenfation the vehicle fuddenly wound over a fpacious drawbridge, and paffing beneath the portcullis entered the fpacious court-yard of a fortified Caftilio, and halted before one of the various

various portals which appeared to conduct to the ſeveral quarters of the building.

One of Ceſario's conductors now drew from his boſom a ſcarf, with which the youth was ordered to veil his ſight; he took the bandeau from the ruffian's hand and without a murmur obeyed his command; they then quitted the carriage, and having aſſiſted Ceſario to alight, led him through various windings of the building, and at length withdrawing the bandeau, the youth found himſelf in a ſpacious chamber illumined only by a glimmering lamp, borne by one of his conductors.

" Senor, you are now arrived at the
" termination of your journey; this and
" the chamber adjoining is allotted you.
" The term of your captivity wholly

" depends upon yourſelf; may prudence
" guide your conduct !"

Having uttered theſe words the bravo placed the lamp upon the table, and, followed by his companion, inſtantly quitted the chamber.

Ceſario gazed awhile upon the hangings of this antique chamber, then taking the light, advanced to the further end of the apartment, and paſſed on to the ſecond room, which was decorated in a ſimilar manner with the firſt, and alſo contained a couch for his repoſe. Haraſſed both in mind and body, this ſight was gratifying to him in the extreme, and he exclaimed aloud, "Thrice " welcome, thou ſoother of the wearied " wretch! on thee will I recline my " haraſſed frame, and court ſweet ſleep " to invigorate my ſoul." The youth falling

falling on his knees ſent forth a ſpontaneous prayer to heaven, then riſing ſtretched himſelf upon the couch and quickly yielded to the charm that ſtole upon his ſenſes.

Broad day had long illumined the earth ere Ceſario awoke from the peaceful ſlumbers which had rocked his troubled ſoul. He quitted the couch, and ſo replete with happineſs had proved his dreams, that he was almoſt unconſcious of the myſterious circumſtances which had ſo recently occurred. He paſſed on to the adjoining chamber, and found refreſhment ſpread upon the table, of which he partook; there were alſo ſeveral volumes left for his peruſal, which proved highly acceptable, as no individual appeared during the whole of the day. Again dim twilight came, and the youth being deprived of the friendly gleam of the lamp, determined

to

to throw himſelf upon the couch and ſeek an early repoſe that he might awake by dawn the enſuing day.

Already had ſleep's early ſtupor ſeized him, when ſuddenly the opening of the outward chamber-door rouſed him from his ſlumber; Ceſario partly raiſing himſelf from the couch liſtened with the utmoſt attention, when the advancing ſound of meaſured footſteps broke upon his ear, and the faint glimmer of a lamp ſhot through the partly opened portal. The youth on the inſtant quitted the bed and waited with compoſure the appearance of the intruder. In a few ſeconds the door opened, and Ceſario's eyes fixed on a male perſonage, whoſe tall figure was enfolded in an ample cloak; his right hand was concealed, the left bore a burning lamp; the lineaments of his face were not perceivable, as a black vizor totally obſcured his countenance.

tenance. The ſtranger on entering inſtantly raiſed the light, ſo that the rays gave full upon the youth's countenance, which he appeared to examine with the utmoſt ſcrutiny. After ſome moments had elapſed, he placed the lamp upon the table, and after a pauſe thus addreſſed Ceſario in a ſolemn tone of voice:

" Young man, the meaſures that have
" been adopted to ſecrete you, were the
" effect of neceſſity; but know that on
" yourſelf depends the duration of your
" impriſonment. Conſider well there-
" fore the queſtions which ſhall now be
" put to you, for remember that on
" your anſwers to my interrogatories
" hangs your future deſtiny."

Ceſario bowed his head, and the ſtranger thus continued:

" If

" If I miſtake me not thy name is " Ceſario, and thou art the adopted " friend of the Condè Don Rimualdo."

The youth with firmneſs replied, " Such am I titled, myſterious Sir, and " in the Condè's favor I rank high, " though totally unworthy of ſuch " marked preferment."

" Where didſt thou firſt behold Don " Rimualdo?"

Ceſario after a pauſe replied, by detailing the manner in which the Condè had firſt diſcovered him when journeying towards Segovia; and without making mention of the robbers, (for weighty reaſons known only to himſelf,) he informed the ſtranger that he had followed Don Rimualdo from the village, and joined him at Segovia; and then concluded by giving a narration of their journey to Toledo.

The

The myſterious interrogator continued ſilent awhile; ſometimes his dark eyes, which glared through the apertures of the maſk, were fixed on Ceſario, and at others bent downward towards earth.

"Who are thy parents?" at length exclaimed the ſtranger, "whence cameſt "thou, and what is the ſtory of thy "life previous to the interview with "the Condè in the village?"

To this queſtion Ceſario continued mute; at length it was repeated in a more elevated tone, and the youth with calm intrepidity thus replied:

"Stranger, whatſoever thou art, I "fear thee not: learn therefore my an-"ſwer to theſe determined interro-"gatories. The knowledge which I "poſſeſs relative to my birth muſt "never eſcape my lips; the ſpot that "reared me, and my occupation from

"my

" my childhood upward, are alike veiled " in myſtery, nor can I unburthen theſe " circumſtances till the ſolemn oath " which I have ſworn be rendered no " longer binding."

" Speak! on thy life I charge thee " open the ſecrets of thy inmoſt ſoul," reſ med the ſtranger in a voice of thunder, " or dread the worſt that can " befall thee."

" I am prepared," replied the youth, " execute thy purpoſe, I ſhall not waver " in my firm reſolve."

" One hour ſhall ſtill be granted " thee," reſumed the ſtranger, ſtifling the boiling rage that kindled in his breaſt; " may ſober reaſon guide thy " conduct and prompt thee to confeſs!"

He was haſtily retiring from the chamber when Ceſario ſeizing his mantle addreſſed him:

" Stranger,

"Stranger, there needs no time for
"rumination; I have ſworn, nor will I
"violate my oath; thinkeſt thou I can
"heſitate between infamy and honor?"

This ſpeech arouſed the ſtranger's ſtifled rage, he partly threw aſide the cloak: a poinard glittered in his trembling hand; he would have ſtruck, but could not; and after a moment's ſtruggle ruſhed precipitately from the chamber.

A dead ſilence reigned for ſome moments, during which Ceſario's breaſt was agitated with a thouſand emotions that burſt at once upon his ſoul. As he continued thus immovable, the two villains who had firſt conveyed him from Toledo entered the chamber. Having inſtantly commanded the youth to follow their ſteps, they traverſed the outward apartment and gaining a ſmall door, which was concealed behind the hangings,

ings, hurried him up a winding flight of ſteps which were illumined only by narrow apertures in the maſſive walls; a door at length preſented itſelf, whoſe grating bolts being drawn back by one of the ruffians was thrown open, when a dreary dungeon appeared, whoſe damps nearly extinguiſhed the lamp borne by the other deſperado.

Having commanded Ceſario to deſcend the ſteps that conducted into this cell, the door was cloſed to, and the youth left alone, and involved in total darkneſs.

Ere many moments had elapſed, Ceſario felt the damp chill ſtrike his frame: he wound his mantle around him, and, ſeating himſelf upon the ſtone ſtep, gave way to thoſe ideas which the horrors of his ſituation inſpired. This dire abode was rendered more dreadful, if poſſible, by the continued roar of falling

ing water, which precipitated itſelf from a cavity of the rock at no great diſtance from the tower.

Although a ſtranger to fear, Ceſario's endeavours to compoſe himſelf to ſleep were fruitleſs; and as each dreary hour elapſed, a heavy bell with diſmal note proclaimed the time of night. The youth with pleaſure heard each ſullen chime; for every hour brought on the wiſhed-for dawn of day. Oh! how he longed to view, through the ſmall aperture in his dungeon, the early ſtreaks of light lace the eaſtern heaven, that he might be enabled by its friendly gleam to view the narrow limits of his cell, or gaze upon the expanded face of nature. To this fond deſire did he yield his ſoul, till the lengthened toll of midnight ſounded on the breeze.

"Ah!" exclaimed Ceſario mentally, "how many there are await this ſolemn

"hour

"hour with dread! Its note, perhaps, "ſtrikes terror to the ſoul of my per- "ſecutor, or ſeals the doom of many an "unprotected wretch like me. Yet to "my ear its ſounds are welcome muſic. "Then happier far is perſecuted inno- "cence, than grandeur loaded with the "ſting of conſcience!"

To theſe ſuggeſtions Ceſario yielded his mind; they tended to fortify his ſoul, and ſooth him to reſignation, till he ſunk at length into the peaceful arms of downy ſleep.

Scarcely had the eye of day ſhot thro' the heavens its golden light, and rouſed the early tenants of the wood, ere Ceſario awoke, to greet its wiſhed-for coming. He aroſe from his flinty couch, and advanced towards the ſingle narrow aperture in his dungeon; which alone afforded a friendly ray to enliven the ſurrounding gloom. With what exquiſite delight

did he gaze on the wide expanſe of country beneath! It is the conviction of impriſonment that enhances more the valued bleſſings of liberty; and it is thoſe alone who have felt ſecluſion that can adequately eſtimate its worth.

The cell in which Ceſario was confined, was on the height of a tower that reared its flinty form on the ſummit of a rugged precipice. To the left, a foaming ſheet of water bent its rapid courſe to the plains beneath, each moment intercepted by huge maſſes of the rock: to the right appeared the craggy ſides of the eminence, which terminated in a projecting baſtion that obſcured the ſcenery on that ſide: an antique wood ſkirted the baſe of the ſteep beneath the tower, ſpreading its dark verdure over a vaſt extent of country; beyond this a chain of mountains roſe, whoſe eminences, veiled

veiled within the clouds, terminated the diſtance.

After having gazed awhile on this expanſive ſcene, Ceſario turned his regard to the narrow limits of his dungeon. On the pavement were ſcattered the mouldering relics of a treſtle, which had apparently ſerved to ſupport ſome weighty burden; beſide theſe, lay alſo the decayed fragments of a ſeat: nought elſe appeared but the damp green pavement and the ſurrounding walls. Having traverſed awhile the boundaries of his priſon, Ceſario once more bent his ſteps to the narrow opening, through which the playful breezes of morning wafted a freſhning ſweetneſs. Anxious to exhale each paſſing zephyr, the youth conveyed the ſeveral fragments towards the aperture, by which means he raiſed himſelf, and was enabled to gaze more freely

freely around. He continued for a considerable time fixing his regard on the ſublime beauties of nature; and endeavoured to call to mind, if poſſible, the ſituation of the Caſtilio, and thereby learn the name of its owner; through whoſe baſe means he felt aſſured the plan of his ſeizure had been contrived and effected. But all his hopes were fruſtrated; for no object on that ſide the building tended to bring to his remembrance the country or ſituation of the Caſtilio. Wearied at length with the fruitleſs endeavour, Ceſario was preparing to quit his ſituation, when a large ſtone at the edge of the aperture, which formed a part of the wall, moved beneath his hand; this circumſtance did not at firſt arreſt his attention, and it was not till he re-aſſumed his ſituation that curioſity impelled him to withdraw the looſe fragment; beneath which, to his infinite aſtoniſhment, he found a ſilk ſcarf, tightly

twiſted and bound round with a ſmall gold chain. Ceſario taking it up haſtily, withdrew the encircling twiſt, and carefully unfolding the ſcarf, perceived with horror the corroding ſtains of blood with which it was badged in many parts: but how much was his ſurprize augmented, when he diſcovered within the laſt fold the reſemblance, in miniature, of a moſt beautiful female, and with it three ſmall tablets, numbered, and cloſely filled with manuſcript on either ſide. The youth gazed awhile with wonder on the divine lineaments pourtrayed; at length, placing the picture in his boſom, and carefully ſecreting the ſcarf within his veſt, he began the peruſal of the writing traced upon the tablets; and found the contents as follows:

" Reader, whomſoever thou art, if
" the full burſt of pity ever ſwelled thy
" breaſt to ſympathy—if thou art, like
" me,

"me, the inmate of this dread abode, "read on; and from MY ſufferings learn "to think thyſelf ſupremely bleſſed: "for, oh! the truth I have to tell will "harrow up the inmoſt workings of thy "ſoul—it is a tale replete with horror!

"It is the certainty that any after in-"habitant of my cell would ſeek this "aperture to gaze around, which "prompted me to its ſecretion here. "Oh, may the hand of him that ſhall "ope theſe tablets be free from fetters! "and may his ſoul exhale the balmy "breeze of liberty; which now ſeems "loſt to me for ever.

"My birth is nobler than the cruel "lord of this proud caſtle and domain: "his hated title ſhall not ſlur my page; "my hand refuſes to indite his bloody "name; nor will I chill thy boſom, "gentle ſufferer, with that title which "thou knoweſt too well already.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWA

"Don Jerom Duca de Montalvan
" was my ſire. Oh, that a ſon ſhould live
" to loath the name of him to whom
" he owes exiſtence! Yet I his off-
" ſpring ſicken to relate the pride im-
" placable that ſwayed his heart, and
" prompted him to break the bleſſed
" tie 'twixt father and child. For once
" I had a ſiſter; fair ſhe was; of form
" as angels that earthly mortals dream
" of: ſeraphic was her ſoul; for every
" virtue that can adorn a ſublunary
" being was in her breaſt concentred.
" Her woes are linked with mine!
" Where is now my ſiſter, whom I
" loved? Where is my Angela?"

This pathetic appeal operated forcibly on Ceſario's ſoul. "It muſt be ſo!" exclaimed the youth. He drew the the picture from his boſom; and, as he gazed, bedewed it with a flood of gentle pity.

Having

Having in ſome meaſure compoſed his feelings, he continued to read as follows:

"A gentle youth, the Conde Juan "by name, the partner of my ſtudies, "companion of my pleaſures, into whoſe "boſom every ſecret of my own was "poured, and who alike confided in "me, beheld and loved my ſiſter: it "was a flame pure as the object that "inſpired it; for his adoration ſprung "from a knowledge of my Angela's "mental perfections. The ſecret was "confided to me; I preſſed him to this "heart, that ſtill vibrates at the recol- "lection of the bliſsful moment, and "vowed to aid his love. Ere long, my "ſiſter, from my lips, became acquainted "with the fact. I marked her well: "the crimſon hue that died her cheek, "the irregular palpitation of the boſom, "everything convinced me that my

" Juan's love was cherished by a flame " as pure and ardent as his own. I " would not further urge her at this " meeting; but hastening to my friend, " inspired him with a hope that filled " his soul with ecstasy: emboldned by " my words, young Juan made proffer " of his love; and Angela, with blushes, " owned her prepossession in his favour.

" Such was the situation of their " loves: I gloried in the prospect of " their future bliss; and shortly after " sought a private meeting with my sire. " He heard the detail of my sister's " passion, and with attention listened to " my fervent words, which vainly strove " to give an adequate idea of Juan's " ardent affection. At first he spurned " a union with one inferior to himself " in rank. I combated his every ob- " jection; I knelt before him; nor left " his presence till I had obtained his

" acqui-

"acquiefcence with my fond defire.
"Conceive my raptures at that mo-
"ment: I flew to my loved Angela;
"and found her liftening to her Juan's
"love: I feized their hands; I preffed
"them to my heart; I bathed them
"with my tears; and fo powerful was
"the excefs of joy that fwelled my foul,
"that for a time my lips refufed a paf-
"fage to my words. O God! that we
"had died at that bleffed moment! that
"life's drear fcene had clofed upon my
"fight for ever! But peace, perturbed
"heart! 'tis heaven's decree: feek not
"to arraign the will of the Omnipo-
"tent!

"My joy at length found vent: they
"heard my words in filent wonder, and
"thus entranced I led them to my pa-
"rent's prefence. Angela fell proftrate
"at his feet, and hid awhile her blufh-
"ing cheek within his robe: Juan on

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

" his knee with fervor preſſed my fa-
" ther's hand, and breathed a thouſand
" bleſſings on his head.

" The Duca raiſed my ſiſter to his
" breaſt, and breathed a benediction on
" their heads, while I, in bliſs unſpeak-
" able, gazed upon the ſcene before
" me.

" A week elapſed when Juan, im-
" patient of delay, quitted our manſion
" for Leon's Kingdom, where lay his
" fair eſtates. I knew not what did ſtir
" within my breaſt; but as I preſſed him
" to my heart, I felt it yearn within me;
" my Angela too was bathed in dewy ſor-
" row, and grief lay heavy on her heart.

" 'Return, my Juan!' did ſhe cry;
" 'O ſpeed thee back again, my
" love!'

" 'Dear Angela!' he ſighed; the big
" tear trembling in his upliſt eye; ''tis
" that

" that we may ſooner meet to part no " more, that thus I quit thee. O cheer " thee, love! 'tis to my friend thy bro- " ther that I leave thee!

" Again they kiſſed; again he ſtrove " to comfort her; but manhood had " forſook his breaſt: he ſmiled; and " waving thrice his hand, the courſer " quickly bore him from our view; yes, " bore him from my Angela for ever.

" Scarce had the matin rays, which " told the ſecond day of Juan's abſence, " laced the ſky, when letters came " commanding my immediate preſence " with my regiment. This was a dread- " ful blow. Alas! what ſorrow rent " my ſiſter's ſoul! Yet all was vain: " peremptory was the mandate, and I was " compelled to yield. Heavens! how " I tore myſelf from her encircling " arms! How oft did I return and preſs " her to my throbbing breaſt! my father

"melted at the ſight; and as I flew
"from their preſence, he received her
"fainting on his boſom.

"Now draws on the criſis of my ſiſter's fate. O grant me patience, heaven, to indite the ſad, the fatal truth!

"One month was to have been the term of Juan's abſence; and ere the fifth morning from his quitting us, I too was far removed from thoſe I held moſt dear.

"A powerful nobleman (the ſon of him who had when living been my father's friend) arrived at the Caſtilio the very evening of the day which had noted my departure. He ſaw my Angela arrayed in all the witching charms of grief: he felt a paſſion; but not a paſſion ſuch as Juan felt. He made a proffer of his hand, which ſhe with dignity refuſed: ſtung to the ſoul, he ſought my parent; confeſſed

"his

[library stamp]

"his love; proffered his eftate; "made mention of his dignity and "title; and in the end wrought on my "fire fo far, that, after gaining the ftory "of my fifter's and Count Juan's love, "he promifed this detefted fuitor the "completion of his wifhes, could he "in any way diffolve the facred pro- "mife given to my friend. Oh, mer- "ciful heaven, foon indeed it was "diffolved! for at the expiration of the "given term, a meffenger arrived with "tidings, that Don Juan by robbers had "been flain, as fpeeding forward to "rejoin his love he had even braved "the dangers of the night. Oh! blood "fhall one day pay for blood! it was "indeed a damned murderer ftruck the "blow: for on my foul, the Lord of "this domain was he.

"I knew not of the fcenes that had "occurred; for my fifter's letters were "concealed: neither was fhe fuffered

" to behold a line from me: and ere " the month expired, did Angela be- " come the bride of him in whofe fell " dungeon I thus linger.

" At length the fatal tidings reached " my ear: horror ftruck! I afked and " gained at length permiffion to refign " my poft. Wafted on the wings of " air, I hurried to my fire's domain; " but Angela was borne away in tri- " umph by her Lord. I fought my " parent; fell execrations trembled on " my lips:—I loathed a title that " fhould be dear to human nature!— " But foon thefe threatened curfes " vanifhed; for, on the ftately bed on " which my mother bore me, did I " find my father in the agonies of " death. Oh, how I preffed his hand! " how the recollection of his cruelty " was then obliterated from my brain! " My prefence for a time delayed the " blow of death. He wept; and with

" a faint

"a faint voice told me that his tears "were tears of blood; for that they "flowed from a broken heart. He "cursed the hated name of him on "whom he had bestowed my Angela. "He told me that barbarity reigned "o'er his soul with unbridled sway; "for that, his purpose once accom-"plished, he had been deaf to all en-"treaties, and forced his only comfort "from him.

"I made mention of Juan's name; "the Duca shuddered. 'Yes! I saw "him,' did my father exclaim, 'frown-"ing and gored with blood: but now "he stood before me—Oh, if my fears "are true—my child—my Angela—"I have——given thee——murderer.' "I still clasped my parent's hand; a "damp had seized it; and the seal of "death had stopped life's current for "ever."

Cesario,

[stamp] ...SEFFOUR...

Cefario, unable to proceed further, bent his glazed eyes to earth, and yielded for a confiderable time to the conflicting pangs that wrung his fufceptible heart: oft did he raife the tablet to continue the recital, but his fortitude would not permit; at length being more compofed, he thus continued:

" Graced with the antient title of my
" anceftors, rich in the immenfe domains
" that now devolved to me, it feemed
" that Fortune meant to fport with my
" miferies: what was to be done? my
" fifter's doom was irrevocably fixed:
" fhould I repair to the Caftilio and
" arraign the conduct of her detefted
" lord, ftill he would deride and per-
" haps reek all his vengeance on my
" haplefs Angela. Having feen my
" father's corfe placed amid the relics
" of our mouldering anceftors, I de-
" termined on concealing his demife
" for the prefent from my fifter's ear,
" and

" and ſhortly after, alone and in diſ-
" guiſe, I ſought this direful manſion,
" from which I never ſhall depart.

" Having traverſed the wide expanſe
" of country that ſeparated me from
" my beloved ſiſter, I gained at length
" the portal of this gloomy Caſtilio;
" and aſſuming the name of Huberto
" requeſted an audience with its deteſted
" owner. I was uſhered into his pre-
" ſence; and never ſhall I forget the
" lowering gaze he bent upon my fea-
" tures. Having demanded my errand,
" I began a recital of the Duke my
" father's deceaſe: a gleam of ſatis-
" faction ſeemed to illumine his coun-
" tenance at the narration, and he in-
" ſtantly commenced his enquiries con-
" cerning myſelf and the diſpoſal of
" my parent's immenſe eſtates: having
" ſatisfied his curioſity and produced
" the papers by which he became

" maſter

" maſter of the riches demiſed to Angela; I requeſted permiſſion to be " admitted into my ſiſter's preſence, " that I might make her acquainted " with the Duca's death! The villain " pauſed awhile; but in the end granted " my requeſt, and I was uſhered " through ſeveral chambers into that " which ſhe occupied. Happily I had " ſo cautiouſly diſguiſed my features " that ſhe remained unconſcious that it " was her brother that ſtood before " her. Gracious heaven! what a change " was pictured in her looks: thoſe eyes, " once ſo bright, were now become " two fountains, from which a flood of " tears unceaſing flowed; the roſes of " her cheeks had withered, and every " lineament beſpoke dejected miſery.

" My conductor having retired, I " ſoon unveiled myſelf: ſhe flew into " my arms, and for a time we breathed " our

" our mutual agonies in tears and
" groans: at length I told the fatal ter-
" mination of my father's miſeries; and
" from my Angela learnt the com-
" plicated woes which had aſſailed her,
" and the force that had been adopted
" to compel her to a union with the
" wretch her huſband; and ſo much
" did her ſufferings operate on my ſoul
" that I determined to make this Caſtilio
" my reſidence for a time, that I might,
" under the feigned title of Huberto,
" be near my ſiſter's perſon, as I had
" reaſon to expect her huſband's ſecret
" vengeance on my head, ſhould he
" learn my real birth, as he was well
" aware of the deteſtation in which I
" bore his character, and my friendſhip
" for the murdered Condè Juan, whoſe
" ſuit I had ſo ſtrenuouſly forwarded.
" With this determination I made my
" Angela acquainted; ſhe bleſſed me,
" called me more than mortal, and
" praiſed

" praised indulgent heaven that still sent " her a guardian angel to lighten the " weight of complicated wretchedness " that overpowered each faculty of her " soul!

" To lighten a sister's load of grief " did I proffer my services to her hated " Lord; I was received, and during " twelve long months beneath this roof " I lived, supremely blessed in my " Angela's presence, and the converse " which we oft in private held. But " now the scene is closed: it is seven " tedious weeks since, at the dead of " night, forth from my chamber I was " torn by ruffians schooled in blood; " hither they hurried me, and bread " alone hath since been tendered me. " In vain have I addressed the wretch " that brings my scanty sustenance; his " heart is steeled against pity, and deaf " his ear to every tale of woe. Oh,

" cruel

"cruel lot! and muſt I linger here for "ever. Reader, whomſoever thou art, "if captive like myſelf, grant me thy "pity; if free, trace out my fate, and "bring my perſecutor to punition.—— "No change of ſcene preſents itſelf, "I will beneath the ſtone depoſit my "recital: may it one day reach the "hands of my Angela!

"Farewell,

"ALPHONSO DUCA DE MONTALVAN."

* * *

"Oh! God, I have reſumed my re"cital. Stranger, read on, and if thou "haſt a ſoul for pity, hear me but a "little; for horrors direful meet my "frenzied gaze.—My hand's convulſed "——each character is tinged with "blood——liſt—liſt unto me.——

"Bright

" Bright morning's ray now peeps
" over the ſummits of the eaſtern hills,
" and caſts its gleam upon a ſight that
" numbs my ſoul with horror. It was
" yeſternight, when ſtretched upon the
" flinty pavement, and yielding to the
" weight of ſleep that ſtole upon me
" in ſpite of the miſeries that wrung
" my heart, that I was wakened by the
" grating of the outward bolts that
" guard my priſon door; I thought it
" was my gaoler with the accuſtomed
" food, and folding my mantle around
" my face, determined to continue
" mute, nor fix my eyes upon the cruel
" miſcreant. The portal was ſoon
" thrown open; I heeded not the ſound
" of footſteps that traverſed my cell,
" nor aught that paſſed, and ſoon the
" door was again cloſed to, and all re-
" mained in darkneſs and in ſilence.

" Sleep's

" Sleep's ftupor, from which this in-
" trufion had aroufed me, again fhed
" its influence over my foul, nor did I
" wake until the earlieft tinge of light
" fpoke the approach of day. I rofe,
" and through the aperture in my dun-
" geon wall bleffed its bright beam,
" and offered up a prayer to heaven: I
" turned around to feek the food which
" Nature began to lack; when, mantled
" over with a fable pall, my eyes be-
" held a bier: with trembling ftep I
" moved towards it; I feized the fhroud-
" ing mantle, and tore it off—Oh!
" God, it is my Angela, it is my fifter's
" corfe: death fits on her brow, and
" clotted gore ftill marks the gafh
" from which her life's blood iffued:
" during the live long day have I
" wafhed her palid cheek with my
" tears, or blafted her abhorred affaffin.

" * * * * *

" Merciful heaven! night draws on

" apace,

" apace, and ftill no food is brought
" me; this bloody fcarf I have taken
" from off my fifter's breaft; it may at
" fome future period lead to a difcovery:
" with it I will enclofe this faint re-
" femblance of thofe beauties which
" once my Angela poffeffed—— *
" * * * * *
" * * * * *
" Still I have ftrength——the night
" is paffed——Oh! for the laft time do
" I gaze upon the cheek of day—— *
" * * * I would barter
" all my wide domains for one poor
" drop of yonder cataract to moiften
" my parched lips—— * *
" Merciful father! am I to die with
" hunger?—— * * *
" * * * * *
" * * * Thefe many
" hours I have fucked the damps that
" courfe adown my dungeon walls: the
" moifture has refrefhed my lips, but
" hunger

" hunger gnaws my vitals—— *
" * * * * *
" Again day's orb is far advanced, a
" faintnefs fteals upon my frame——I
" am fick, quite fick at heart——my
" fight is dimmed——I clofe the fcene
" ——God——grant me yet time to
" fecrete this fcroll: fifter——Angela,
" I fhall foon be with thee—— *
" * * * * *
" * * * * *

"Father of mercy," exclaimed
" Cefario, dropping the tablets, " it
" was in this very cell the mangled corfe
" of Angela was laid; thefe are the frag-
" ments of the bier that did fupport her
" lovely frame. Oh! horrible,——
" in this dungeon, yes even here
" Alphonfo di Montalvan died; but
" fuch a death as makes my ftream of
" blood recoil.—Yes, wretched fuf-
" ferers! the narration of your miferies
" has

" has met the eye of one who can ſym-
" pathize in thoſe woes which are now
" huſhed for ever in the ſilent manſion
" of the grave.—Peace, peace be to
" your duſt, and may unheard of hor-
" rors rack the villain's heart that had
" no touch of feeling, no compunction
" in his ſoul."

After a pauſe, during which the youth concealed within his boſom the bloody record, and yielded to the multiplicity of ideas which the peruſal had awakened in his breaſt, he thus exclaimed:

" Yes, Alphonſo di Montalvan, thy
" thoughts were juſt; it was indeed this
" wretched aperture that firſt attracted
" my regard, for thoſe who are bereft
" of liberty ſtill love to gaze upon the
" expanded view of joys they never
" perhaps muſt viſit more. Oh,
" heavens! of late I could in this drear
" abode have framed my mind to ſweet

" contentment! But now I am rouſed " to action; I am called to execute a " deed of juſtice, to ſhower deſtruction " on the murderer's head: it is now " that for the firſt time I feel the glo- " rious bleſſings of liberty, and learn " to appreciate its worth. Oh! that " ſome gentle hand would looſe the " bolts that bar my paſſage hence: " then ſhould my ſoul unſhackled make " its plea even at the foot of ſove- " reignty. Yes, in the preſence of my " King I would unmaſk the traitor's " damned deeds, and the quick bolt of " juſtice ſhould hurl down death upon " him."

Ceſario roſe and paced awhile the dungeon with diſordered ſtep; ſometimes he pauſed; and as his eye caught the mouldering bier, a pitying drop would grace his cheek, and a ſigh eſcape his boſom for the paſt ſufferings which

virtue had endured. At length the miſt of twilight began to dim the weſtern ſky, and as the hour of evening approached, dark ſheets of lowering clouds obſcured the cheek of heaven, and haſtened the coming of night's murky gloom; the ſwelling wind aroſe and whiſtled through the crannies of the rock; and the unceaſing roar of the water's impetuous fall encreaſed the dreary gloom.

Ceſario approached the outlet; but now the faint gleam of day had fled, and torrents deluged the ſcene around.

" Perhaps," exclaimed the youth, " even in ſuch a night as this, the Duca " di Montalvan died; for ſure the face " of nature was not ſerene at the con- " ſummation of ſuch a deed of atrocious " barbarity! Gracious Powers! and do " you ſtill ſuffer the miſcreant to brave " the frowns of fate? does earth's pro-

" creative bosom still bear the wretch's
" loathsome burthen?"

Cesario paused and then continued, "Yes, heaven's justice is displayed; "the villain still exists to curse his life, "hating all, and by the world detested. "He lives to feed the rankling ulcer "of his soul—to feel the scorpion lash "of burthened conscience. Yes, he "lives; but such a life as he would with "joy be freed from; but that the certainty of greater torments in the "world to come withhold him from an "act of self-destruction."

Such were the train of reflections that occupied Cesario's mind till near the midnight hour. Again he stretched his frame upon the flinty floor, and courted renovating sleep; but such was the impression made upon his feelings by the perusal of the sufferings of the Duca di

Montalvan and his loved Angela, that he ſought in vain to lull the ſympathetic pang that rent his gentle heart. From this train of painful reflections he was at length awakened by the ſound of heavy footſteps which approached his dungeon door, and in an inſtant the bolts were drawn back, when Ceſario beheld the ſame maſked perſonage that had viſited him on the preceding night; his form as before was concealed by a mantling garment, and the dim light he bore caſt but an imperfect gleam around the dungeon walls. Having placed the lamp upon the ſtone ſtep, the ſtranger advanced a few paces towards the ſpot where Ceſario lay, and bending his regard upon him for an inſtant, addreſſed him as follows:

« Again, preſumptuous youth! I have « deigned to viſit you; yet think not « that I will bear a ſecond repetition of

« your

"your boldneſs; for know, ſtripling, that "ſhould ſuch unwarrantable language "again eſcape your lips, I have not "only the power to puniſh, but an arm "that will not ſhrink if urged to do "its duty. Conſider well therefore your "unprotected ſituation; remember alſo "that my bounty ſhall be laviſhed on "you, if tractable you yield to my in- "quiries."

The ſtranger pauſed; indignation ſwelled Ceſario's breaſt, and he caſt in ſilence a contemptuous look upon the threatening form that ſtood before him.

"Once more," reſumed the ſtranger, "I charge you, as you prize exiſtence, "anſwer on the inſtant to my interro- "gatory. Who were thy parents? "where waſt thou reared? and in what "manner did that period of thy life "elapſe previous to the rencontre with "the Condè Rimualdo?"

Ceſario riſing calmly from the pavement bent a ſtern regard upon the ſtranger, and advancing ſome paces towards him with a firm ſtep, replied.

" By what right do you claim my
" anſwer to theſe queſtions? In what
" manner do they concern a being not
" only in appearance eſtranged to me,
" but who aſſumes a vizard to ſcreen
" his perſon from my view? If right,
" if juſtice be your plea, why thus
" myſterious, ſince juſtice ſhould be
" open as the face of day?—Thinkeſt
" thou that threatenings can appal me?
" Thinkeſt thou that in this breaſt I
" bear a daſtard ſoul? No; fearleſs I
" ſtand before you; for, if I miſtake
" not, a fiend more black than hell now
" meets my ſickened gaze.—Where is
" the ſpotleſs creature whom you once
" called wife? Where is Angela and
" her murdered love? Where is the
" waſted being whom your barbarity

" condemned

" condemned to pangs unutterable; " to ſtarve unpitied? Yes, where"——

At firſt, appalled, the ſtranger ſtarted back at mention of Angela's name, but rouſed to madneſs by Ceſario's words, he caſt the cloak aſide, and from his girdle drew a glittering poinard; already was he ruſhing towards the youth, the pealing thunder roared, the caſtle clock beat twelve—the villain groaned and ſtarted back, when by the violence of the action the maſk was looſened, and fell to the ground. But who can conceive Ceſario's horror when the form of the Marques di Badajos met his gaze: terror was depicted in his look, which glared horribly upon the dungeon wall——

" It is there," he exclaimed in an agonized voice, " mark where it glides " —blaſt me not thus with thy vengeful " gaze."

Cesario turned his eyes around the prison, but nothing was visible; while the Marques in a seeming state of stupefaction fell back, with unsteady step, towards the entrance of the dungeon, and presently disappeared. The youth in silent astonishment had beheld the scene, nor could he for a considerable length of time recall his wandering recollection. But when the cooler beam of reason shed its influence over his mind, in what detestation did he view the character of the Marques.

"Ah," thought the youth, "for "once the visage bears the semblance "of the mind; for murder and fell "horrors are familiar to the soul of "the remorseless Marques."

While yielding to the ideas which the late scene had given rise to, Cesario suddenly fixed his eyes upon the portal of

of his dungeon, which the Marques in his trepidation had unconſciouſly left uncloſed.

" This is perhaps the work of fate," exclaimed Ceſario, advancing towards the priſon door; " yes, Providence un-" bars the barrier that has till now im-" peded my flight; I am the object " through whoſe means equal judgment " is to be adminiſtered, nor will I ſhrink " from the duty which fate impoſes on " me."

Ceſario raiſed the lamp which the Marques had left burning on the pavement, and was preparing to quit the cell, when the approach of haſty footſteps again broke upon the night breeze; now the ſounds grew more diſtinct, and preſently a maſked ruffian burſt into the dungeon.

"Young man," vociferated the bravo in a dreadful tone, "the taſk is mine—"prepare for inſtant death."

As he concluded theſe words he advanced towards the youth with haſty ſtrides; but on a ſudden pauſed, and having apparently examined the lineaments of Ceſario's countenance with the utmoſt attention, exclaimed aloud, "It is he, mine eyes do not deceive "me.—What, harm him; no, I have "ſworn a robber's ſacred oath, and "rather would I die than raiſe this hand "againſt my chieftain."

The ruffian inſtantly unmaſked his viſage, when Ceſario beheld one of the moſt deſperate of that very gang with which he was ſo myſteriouſly connected, and from whoſe power he had releaſed the Condè Rimualdo in the foreſt.

"Yes,

"Yes, I was thy leader," returned the youth; "and now I throw myſelf "on thy protection."

"Thank my ſtars," replied the bravo, "that it was I whom the Mar-"ques diſpatched upon this errand; had "not his truſty Sebaſtiano died of the "wounds he received, he would have "ſealed your fate, and I ſhould have "loſt the ſatisfaction of ſaving my "leader, and giving one proof of a "Spaniard's unſullied honor. Tell me, "Chieftain, how can I ſerve you; for "with my life will I ſhield yours, which "I am bound by oath to protect from "every impending danger."

"Generous fellow!" cried Ceſario in an exceſs of gratitude, "it is my releaſe "from the power of the Marques, "which I ſeek.—Effect but my eſcape, "and your reward"——

 "Reward!"

"Reward!" haftily interrupted the bravo, "what fhould be a Spaniard's "reward but the confcioufnefs of "having kept his faith unfullied."

"Yet hold," continued he, after a paufe, "your refcue, Captain, is for the "prefent the only object to be attended "to; and we are in the manfion of a "villain who is furrounded by creatures "ready to obey his every command: "would that fome of our gang were "here; force might then have effected "the meafure, but, alas! they will never "ferve you more."

Having paced the dungeon for fome moments abforbed in thought, he thus continued: "Torn with a thoufand "dreadful agonies the Marques even "now waits anxioufly in his chamber "to learn the fulfilment of his bloody "purpofe.—I muft thither inftantly "and fay the deed is done; thus will

"his

" his fears on your account be quieted,
" and ere the hour of two will I return
" and free you from his power."

Cesario would have spoken, but the bravo waved his left hand, and placing the right upon his breast retired from the dungeon, and closed to the door. The force of language is inadequate to give a just idea of the state of Cesario's mind during the period that intervened; his life seemed to be heaven's peculiar care; for twice had the assassin's arm been raised, and twice had Providence warded off the impending blow. After a spontaneous flow of gratitude offered up to the Divinity, to whose overruling power alone he attributed his wonderful escape from impending death, Cesario began to consider what method should be adopted on his release from the Castilio, in order to bring the infamous Marques to the dread tribunal of justice.

And

And after ſome deliberation he determined on haſtening to Toledo without delay, where he truſted the Condè muſt then be arrived, into whoſe keeping he would confide the horrid tale, and produce the ſeveral documents ſo ſtrangely diſcovered.

"It is then," exclaimed Ceſario, "that I ſhall experience the counſels "of a friend; yes, my Rimualdo will "aid me in the courſe of juſtice, and "the meaſures which muſt be adopted "will perhaps throw ſome light upon "the myſtery attending his beloved "Conſtanza."

The youth yielded his mind for a while to the joy which this idea gave riſe to, when ſuddenly a recollection of the character of the robber from whom he expected his releaſe, obtruded on his brain, and checked the full guſt of pleaſure that ſwayed his inmoſt ſoul.

"What!"

"What!" thought Cesario mentally, "can honor be the inmate of such a "ruffian's bosom, would he not have "struck me to the heart, but that the "recollection of my having once been "his superior withheld him; and where- "fore did this remembrance check the "blow? Because, since Sebastiano's "death, he is become chief instrument "in the diabolical plans of his employer; "consequently he must know the cause "of my detention here: and having "gained the knowledge which the "Marques is so anxious to be made ac- "quainted with, he is gone to develope "the history of my life previous to my "rencontre with the Condè, and thus "I shall be delivered over to justice as "the chieftain of robbers; the Condè "Rimualdo's character will be vilified "for having countenanced an abandoned "ruffian; the Marques will experience "the satisfaction of my death, without

"staining

" ftaining his hands with my blood; and
" I fhall be precluded from the fuppofed
" bafenefs of my character, from
" drawing down punition on the head
" of a nobleman fo depraved and power-
" ful."

Thefe fuggeftions wrought fo forcibly on the foul of the youth, that he traverfed the cell in a ftate little fhort of diftraction. At length the bell ftruck two, and on the inftant approaching footfteps met Cefario's attentive ear; he remained transfixed to the fpot, for the found of voices alfo broke upon the fullen breeze of night.

" Then the villain has betrayed me," cried the youth in an agony, " yes, he
" comes accompanied by the Marques,
" and now my fate is fixed irrevocable."

At length the footfteps halted at the portal of the dungeon, and the conver-

fation

ſation grew more impaſſioned; a violent ſtruggle was ſuddenly heard, and immediately after a hollow groan ſwelled upon the wind; Ceſario involuntarily ſhuddered at the ſound—on the inſtant the door grated on its hinges and diſplayed the bravo who had ſo lately quitted the youth; his left hand bore a lamp, while the right held a poinard laved in blood; deſcending into the cell he approached Ceſario and thus addreſſed him:

"Chieftain, I have deceived the "Marques; he thinks you dead, and is "now retired to his couch to dream "of terrors; for hell is in his mind. "Oh! had you but ſeen him when I "breathed the tidings in his ear! there "was agony in his look, and from his "eyes glared horrors that even made "*me* ſhudder. Hither by his order "was I diſpatched with one who ſleeps "without,

" without, to bear away your corſe: I
" would have wrought him to my pur-
" poſe, but the villain proved refractory,
" and I was urged to ſtay the prating
" of his tongue; mark my dagger,
" Chieftain, it is his heart's blood that
" dyes the blade. But let us hence;
" within your mantle we will enfold his
" corſe, while you, ſecure, may wrap
" yourſelf in his, and thus eſcape de-
" tection ſhould any one perchance ob-
" ſerve us. Come, Captain, two horſes
" wait without the ſecret wicket that
" leads into the foreſt; thither we muſt
" ſpeed, and after ſecreting yon carcaſe
" in the cell where once Sebaſtiano
" dwelt, and where he alſo lies, I will
" then obey your will, and follow where-
" ſoever you lead me."

The bravo then ſheathing his dagger exchanged Ceſario's cloak for that of the

the murdered wretch; he likewiſe armed the youth with the villain's weapons, and having wrapped the lifeleſs body in the mantle, deſcended with it down the ſtaircaſe, aided by Ceſario, whoſe very blood congealed at the ſcene he witneſſed, and in which, from neceſſity, he was compelled to become active.

Everything was ſilent within the building, and they gained the wicket in ſafety; having extinguiſhed the lamp and cloſed to the gate, the body was placed upon one of the horſes, which the bravo led, while Ceſario mounted the other. In this manner they proceeded through a narrow path which was not illumined by a ſingle ray, owing to the gloomineſs of the night, and the thick foliage of the overhanging branches. After ſome time they emerged from the pitchy darkneſs into a wider pathway, and preſently Ceſario beheld the well remembered ruined

ruined chapel. Having gained the cell which had once been the habitation of Conſtanza and Sebaſtiano, the ſuppoſed monk, (now no more,) they ſoon ſecreted their lifeleſs load. When each vaulting his ſteed, the youth took the direct road towards Toledo, followed at full ſpeed by the bravo, to whom he was thus indebted for life and liberty.

CHAP. II.

But now the hand of fate is on the curtain,
And draws the ſcene to ſight.——— DRYDEN.

Seek not to know what yet muſt lie concealed;
Joys only flow where fate is not revealed:
Too buſy man would find his ſorrows more,
If future fortunes he ſhould know before:
For, by that knowledge of his deſtiny,
He would not live at all, but always die.
All muſt ſubmit to their appointed doom:
Fate weaves our deſtiny; 'twill quickly come.
HOWARD.

WITH the ſame rapidity did Ceſario continue to advance, till the early matin rays overtopped the diſtant hills, and with its enlivening gleam diſperſed the murky clouds which had obſcured, during the night, heaven's ſpangled arch.—Having halted for a ſhort time at the firſt village where they arrived, both to refreſh

refresh themselves and their horses, the youth and his attendant both recommenced their journey without delay.

Cesario had not proceeded far from the village, when the faithful bravo, his follower, began to address him as follows:

"The promptitude which we have
"been compelled, Chieftain, to adopt,
"has till this moment prevented my
"disclosing an event which harrows up
"my soul and calls for retribution.
"Last night I told you, Captain, that
"our comrades would never serve you
"more, and by my soul I spoke too
"true: the gallant fellows have paid the
"debt of Nature. Yes, all except my-
"self and you, my Chieftain, are num-
"bered with the dead."

"What," exclaimed Cesario, "is
"the troop annihilated? are our haunts

" in the foreſt left deſolate? are we the " only remaining of the hardy ſet?"

" It is even ſo, Chieftain," replied the bravo with a bitter ſigh; " but if it " pleaſe you, I will relate the dire event; " my ſtory will be ſhort."

Ceſario motioned him to proceed, and he continued:

" It was the ſixth night after your " quitting the foreſt in company with " the Cavaliero and his attendant, whom " you thought fit to reſcue from their " fate, for reaſons which we all endea- " voured to fathom, but in vain, that " Felipe was diſpatched by Pablos to " practice one of her wily arts in order " to entrap a rich Don and his do- " meſtic, whom he had learnt were to " paſs the foreſt that night. Times " had gone hard with us, and we were " overjoyed at this opportunity of en-

" riching

" riching ourſelves. Diego, as uſual
" played the runaway aſſaſſin, after
" whom the Senor having heard Felipe's
" woeful tale, diſpatched his attendant,
" while ſhe led the ſeemingly unſuſpect-
" ing Cavaliero to our cottage. Lorano
" having offered refreſhment on their
" arrival, and conducted himſelf with
" his accuſtomed art, preſſed the Senor
" to repoſe beneath our roof; who, ap-
" parently ſurpriſed at finding his ſer-
" vant did not return, and appearing
" ſomewhat weary, and at the ſame
" time peculiarly ſmitten with Felipe's
" appearance, at length accepted the
" propoſal; when ſhe, without delay, led
" him to the chamber. Myſelf and
" four others were at that time in the
" cave, our uſual place of concealment,
" adjoining the cottage. Lorano's
" whiſtle ſummoned us, and we all re-
" paired to him on the inſtant. His
" firſt

" firſt queſtion was, 'Whether Diego " had not yet joined us?' we aſſured him " that ſince his quitting the cottage to " aid Felipe's deſign, we had heard no- " thing concerning him. 'Then ſome- " thing is wrong,' ſaid he haſtily; 'every " man of you muſt go forth on the " inſtant, and ſcour the foreſt in every " direction!' We obeyed the order " without delay, and quitted Lorano at " the door of the cottage.

" During two hours I wound through " the mazes of the wood, when almoſt " weary with the fruitleſs endeavour to " trace Diego's ſteps, I was about to " return.

" As I ſtood conſulting what were beſt " to be done, a heavy groan ſuddenly " caught my attention: it was ſhortly " after repeated; when the ſound led me " to the ſpot whence it had iſſued; and

"to my ſorrow I beheld, bleeding and "ſtretched upon the turf, our faithful "comrade Diego. I haſtened to raiſe "him; but he ſhook his head, and ſent "forth a heavy groan that fully con- "vinced me all attempts to relieve "him would be vain. However I pro- "ceeded to examine his wound; but "found his body lacerated in ſeveral "places—I would have fled for help, "but he graſped my arm with all the "firmneſs he was maſter of.

"'Hold, hold,' cried he in a faint "tone of voice, 'do not ſtrive to ſuc- "cour me; for my wounds are mortal; "but fly and ſave our comrades, we are "betrayed!—'

"Here he pauſed awhile; and then in "in a fainter tone continued:

"'Thou rememberest the nobleman "whom we ſo lately plundered; and

"who

" who ſuffered by Lorano's hand, not-
" withſtanding all our entreaties to the
" contrary. 'Tis his murder will prove
" our ruin——he was Commander of
" a troop under the King—his loſs they
" ſwore to revenge—they traced him to
" this foreſt, and by ſecret means learnt
" his fate—'Tis an officer of his regiment
" diſguiſed that is now within the
" cottage.

" 'I fell by the hands of ſix of the
" troop, that were purpoſely planted to
" ſurprize me. They promiſed mercy,
" would I confeſs the death of their
" Commander—I did ſo; and they re-
" warded me with theſe gaſhes——But
" I am faint——haſte away——be
" wary! for a—— troop lines the
" foreſt———'

" I preſſed Diego's hand—he ſeemed
" convulſed at that moment—the pangs

" of death were on him—he expired in
" my arms.

" No time was to be loſt :—and by a
" circuitous route I gained in ſafety the
" ſecret path which conducts to the
" unknown entrance into the cottage.
" On paſſing into the dark paſſage, behind
" the wainſcoating of the lower chamber,
" I looked through the ſmall aperture:
" but what was my horror at beholding
" upon the ground, the lifeleſs bodies of
" Pablos and Lorano! Felipe, and the
" three comrades that had ſallied forth
" with me in purſuit of Diego, were
" bound and guarded. At the board
" were ſeveral troopers regaling them-
" ſelves; while the ſmall table by the
" fire-place was occupied by the diſ-
" guiſed officer and ſeveral others of
" the regiment. Finding that two of
" our gang, as well as myſelf, had yet
" eſcaped, I determined to go in purſuit
" of

"of them and warn them of the immi-
"nent danger to which we were exposed
"unless we instantly secured ourselves
"by a precipitate flight from the forest.
"I was on the point of quitting my
"place of safety for that purpose, when
"suddenly the door of the cottage was
"thrown open, and my two remaining
"comrades, bound and guarded, were
"brought in.

"'Tis well,' exclaimed one of the
"officers on beholding them, 'we have
"now secured ten of this atrocious gang
"of desperados: their Chieftain and ano-
"ther still remain; secure them, and
"then, my gallant fellows, our revenge
"will be complete!'

"Well, Captain, the night passed on;
"and still they waited in the expectation
"of finding us: and, by what passed, I
"learnt that every avenue of the forest
"had been examined. In the morning
"they

SERTOGI'S

" they renewed the ſearch; each cranny " of the cottage was explored, and I " almoſt dreaded a diſcovery. How- " ever concluding at length that we had " been appriſed of our danger, the troop " received orders to march; and by " mid-day they had diſappeared with " their priſoners, and all within the build- " ing was ſilence and deſolation.

" Fatigued, and faint with hunger, I " ſtill continued ſecreted till duſk, leſt any " of the troop ſhould have been left within " the foreſt. Yielding at length to the " preſſure of want, which had nearly " overpowered me, I with difficulty " mounted the narrow ſtairs, and en- " tered the cottage, by the ſliding pan- " nel that communicated with the bed- " room, from which I deſcended to " the lower chamber: and fed of the " remnants that were left ſcattered on " the board. Within the cottage I con-

" tinued

"tinued till night; when finding there "was no danger, I quitted the habita- "tion and made the beſt of my way to "Madrid; where I ſoon learnt that my "comrades had ſuffered by the hand of "juſtice. From that city I proceeded "to Toledo; where I inliſted with a "ſet of bravos; and there by indirect "means was I applied to by the Marques "di Badajos, who, finding me apt to "his purpoſe, ſhowered bounties on me, "and took me into his ſervice.

"Unconſcious who you was, Chieftain, "'twas I who planned the mode of your "being conveyed to the Caſtle di Badajos: "and this very day did he purpoſe that "I ſhould go in purſuit of a female, "whom he had diſpatched to a monaſ- "tery under the guidance of Sebaſtiano, "but who was reſcued by the Condè "Rimualdo, under whoſe protection ſhe "now is. It was with the utmoſt diffi-

" culty that Sebaſtiano gained the Caſtle
" alive, to give a detail of the fact to
" the Marques; for the expedition with
" which he had at firſt travelled inflamed
" the wound given him by the Condè
" to ſuch a degree, that he was neceſſi-
" tated to proceed with leſs precipi-
" tation. Thus his return to the Caſtilio
" was much impeded: and he arrived
" but to acquaint the exaſperated and
" almoſt frantic Marques with the fact;
" ſhortly after which he expired."

It may eaſily be conceived what were Ceſario's feelings on being made acquainted with the latter part of the bravo's detail. But if the intelligence relative to the Condè Rimualdo and Conſtanza afforded him ſuch delight, what joy did he internally experience on learning the total extirpation of the gang in the foreſt, with which he had been ſo unaccountably connected! for it was

" this

this circumſtance alone that could exonerate him from the oath he had taken, which ſo myſteriouſly concealed his conduct, and threw a dubious veil upon the excellent qualifications which he poſſeſſed.

Having heaped a thouſand thanks upon the bravo's head Ceſario promiſed him fortune and all he could deſire, ſhould he for the future abſtain from the deteſted courſe of life he had but too long adopted. He the more readily made this proffer, as he felt convinced that Rimualdo would not withhold his wonted generoſity in the preſent inſtance; particularly when made acquainted with the bravo's ſingular uprightneſs of conduct: which, although practiſed in a bad cauſe, ſtill evinced the internal integrity that actuated his conduct in a point where his oath of

allegiance to his Chieftain had been pledged.

The bravo having frankly confeſſed that neceſſity alone led him to adopt a line of conduct ſo unjuſtifiable, and that he would joyfully embrace a life of eaſe and ſafety were it in his power, Ceſario again aſſured him that he ſhould be ſatisfied to the extent of his wiſhes, in caſe he would retire beyond the boundaries of Spain; where his former courſe of life would for ever remain a ſecret buried in his own breaſt.

The deſperado with joy embraced the liberal offer made him by his leader: after which, Ceſario again yielding to the joyful emotions of his ſoul, already pictured himelf in the open arms of his friend Rimualdo.

They

They continued their journey during the whole of the day, and having merely afforded their horſes the neceſſary reſt that night, ſet forwards ere the dawn of day, and by evening entered the wiſhed-for gates of Toledo's noble city.

CHAP. III.

The Pow'rs above, who bounteoufly beftow
Their gifts and graces on mankind below,
Yet prove our merit firft; nor blindly give
To fuch as are unworthy to receive;
For valour and for virtue they provide
Their due reward; but firft they muft be try'd:
Thefe fruitful feeds within your mind they fow'd;
'Twas yours t' improve the talent they beftow'd:
They gave you to be born of noble kind;
They gave you love to lighten up your mind,
And purge the groffer parts. —— DRYDEN.

THE Condè Rimualdo finding that all fearch after his loft friend was vain, and unconfcious of the meafures which the Marques his father would adopt in refpect to the object of his love, yielded himfelf a prey to the moft filent dejection: in vain was his fociety courted by the moft powerful noblemen of the Court;

Court; in vain did the gay youthful heirs of thoſe very families ſtrive to enliven him. The favours of the Monarch, the friendſhip of the great, and the ſociety of thoſe whoſe age and purſuits ſhould have accorded with his own, proved alike unſucceſsful; and the Condè was the ſolitary inmate of his own hotel.

Such was the ſtate of Rimualdo's mind at the period of his friend's return to Toledo. On the wings of joy Ceſario flew to the manſion of his friend. No ſooner had he entered the hall, but the joyful tidings were inſtantly known throughout the hotel; and Ceſario juſt gained the ſtudy at the moment when his friend, appriſed by Geronimo of his return, was haſtening to meet him: their arms were involuntarily ſpread; each claſped the other to his overjoyed boſom; while in their eyes ſtood the bright drop of dewy pleaſure.

After

After the firſt burſt of delight had ſubſided, the Condè anxiouſly inquired the cauſe of his friend's ſtrange diſappearance from the city; when Ceſario circumſtantially detailed the meaſures which had been adopted to ſecure him, and the ſubſequent conduct of the cruel Marquesdi Badajos: butwhen the youth produced the fatal narrative which he had ſo ſingularly diſcovered in the dungeon —when the blood-ſtained ſcarf, and the touching reſemblance of the ſuffering Antonia met the Condè's eye, what mingled emotions of horror and pity rent his feeling heart! Neither did the knowledge of the contents of the ſcroll diminiſh Ceſario's emotion on this ſecond peruſal of its dire contents. Their boſoms were mutually inſpired with love, indignation, and hatred; nor could the Condè withhold the curſe that trembled on his lip at the recital of a deed ſo cruel and atrocious.

After

After venting aloud the feelings with which their bosoms were inspired, Cesario proceeded to give a detail of his second interview with the Marques when in the dungeon. Rimualdo shuddered at the idea of the danger to which the youth had been exposed; and blessed Divine Providence, which had so signally interfered to check the murderous intent of the Marques. For the Condè concurred in opinion with his friend, in attributing the dreadful horror that seized him to the ideal appearance of those innocents who had fallen a prey to his barbarity. But if these incidents awakened Rimualdo's astonishment, how considerably was that feeling heightened when he learnt from the youth the extraordinary manner of his release from the power of his detested gaoler. Again he sent the silent orison to heaven; again his hands in wonder were uplifted

to the Divinity; and ſo merciful was the noble Condè, that even Sebaſtiano's villany was forgotten when he learnt the tidings of his death. No rancour was in his heart; the monſter was no more; and Rimualdo wiſhed his ſoul to be at peace.

Having concluded the narrative, and gained the Condè's joyful acquieſcence to the bounty which Ceſario had ſo liberally promiſed the preſerver of his life, the youth eagerly requeſted to be made acquainted with the occurrences that had taken place in the courſe of his purſuit after Conſtanza. Rimualdo gladly yielded to his friend's ſolicitation, by unveiling every incident which had happened. The Condè's words greatly intereſted the attentive youth, and raiſed alternate emotions in his breaſt that fully evinced the ſincerity of his attachment to the perſon and happineſs of his friend.

Ceſario,

Cefario, after fympathizing with his friend for the lofs of the object of his adoration, endeavoured to infpire him with the hope that they would yet meet, and that fmiling felicity would in the end reward their conftancy and love. He affirmed that bafe injuftice was not the characteriftic of the Marques del Lara's mind; and that confequently he would not rafhly condemn a defencelefs creature, who, though bafely attainted, had not been proved guilty of the crimes alleged. Cefario did not even fcruple to applaud the wary conduct of Rimualdo's parent in this inftance; and fo far did he reconcile the Condè's mind, and infpire him with a pleafing hope of future joy, that he felt unburdened of the weight that lay upon his foul, and more than ever cherifhed the balmy voice of fympathetic friendfhip.

Cefario

Cesario having thus quieted the internal perturbation of his friend, addressed him as follows:

"Although, dear Condè! the secret "of my strange connexion with the "robbers has been withheld from your "ear, in consequence of an oath which "I have ever kept inviolable; yet think "not that my vow was for ever binding; "it depended wholly on one event, and "that event, my friend, has taken place. "Conceive then the joy I must experi-"ence in being thus enabled to remove "the veil which has till now lowered "o'er my fate. It was the dispersion "of the gang, of which I was the sworn "Chief, which could alone free me; "and they are annihilated."

Cesario then proceeded to relate the account given him by the bravo his deliver, after which he thus continued:

"From

"From infancy was I reared within "the robbers' den; and often did my "puerile days witness scenes that were "repugnant to my feelings; neither did "I fail to make those feelings known. "At first I was chid by the gang; who "endeavoured to initiate me to those "scenes in which they themselves were "hardened; but my soul revolted from "such tuition with horror, and I more "than ever raised my boyish voice in "opposition to such principles. At "length, wearied with my constant prat- "ing, as it was deemed, I was harshly "threatened; and finding all endeavors "fruitless, was compelled to witness in "silence those frequent acts of cruelty "and injustice. The then chieftain of "the gang, notwithstanding the wonted "ruggedness of his nature, had ever "treated me with peculiar kindness, "and on the attainment of my tenth "year, (as I was then informed,) the

"Captain,

"Captain, in the preſence of the whole "troop at that time purpoſely aſſem-"bled, titled me his child; and to the "gang individually proffered an oath, "that I ſhould at his death receive their "homage as Chieftain: but in caſe "he ſhould be taken or fall in any "hoſtile attack ere I had attained to "years of manhood, that then the ſituation "of Chieftain ſhould be veſted in Lo-"rano and Pablos, who were to relin-"quiſh it on the completion of my "twentieth year. This oath was ratified "by every fellow of the troop: and I "at that unripe age was alſo compelled "to make a ſolemn vow that I would "never divulge the ſecrets of the gang, "nor make known the moſt trivial "circumſtance relative to myſelf, un-"leſs their haunts were diſcovered, "and the whole troop diſperſed or an-"nihilated.

"Beſides

"Beſides thoſe of the gang, an old female was alſo an inhabitant of the cottage: ſhe had been early initiated in ſcenes of depravity, and at length ſought ſhelter from the hands of juſtice by quitting Madrid, her native city, and mingling with this crew. Yet notwithſtanding the depravedneſs of her character, ſhe ſtill poſſeſſed at times ſome touch of feeling; and would often, during the abſence of the gang, ſit and gaze upon my features, till methought the tear would ſteal from her eye. At ſuch times I was wont to queſtion her, and deprecate thoſe acts which I was no longer ſuffered to do in preſence of the troop. She would liſten attentively to my words; and preſſing my hand within hers, raiſe her eyes from my countenance, and turn them towards heaven; myſterious words would alſo eſcape her

" lips.

"lips. At times ſhe would exclaim,
"*'Tis moſt wonderful——The ways of Providence are indeed unſearchable——How his mind ſpeaks* THAT *he really is!*——

"I frequently interrogated her as to "theſe expreſſions; when, ſeeming to "recollect herſelf, ſhe would quit her "ſeat, and in an aſſumed tone of com- "mand, order me to ſilence: and thus "a year elapſed without any material "occurrence taking place.

"I was beloved by the Chieftain my "ſuppoſed father; and the whole gang, "whatſoever might be their real ſenti- "ments, ſtill in appearance reſpected "and were partial to me.

"About this time, through age and a "debilitated conſtitution, the old female "was taken ill; ſo that during the "abſence of the crew, I was left alone

"to

SENT-DOTI & BAL...

" to adminiſter to her wants: and ſo " much did my conduct gain upon her " that ſhe made the confeſſion which I " ſhall now relate.

" Having previouſly ſworn me to the " moſt inviolable ſecreſy, and annexed " thereto a ſecond oath, purporting that " I ſhould never vary my conduct, ow- " ing to any circumſtance which I " ſhould learn from her, but maintain " the ſituation which I had ſolemnly " ſworn to hold with the gang, I bound " myſelf to ſilence as required; and en- " tered into this ſecond oath in order " to obtain the ſecret which I felt con- " vinced was of the utmoſt conſequence " to myſelf, and which I had ſo long " been anxious to obtain.

" Half-raiſing herſelf from the pallet " on which ſhe lay, I took my ſeat " beſide her, when ſhe addreſſed me " nearly to the following purport:

" 'Juan,'

" 'Juan,' for ſuch was the name I
" bore among the robbers; 'thou art yet
" a child, nor would I confide in thee,
" but that a nobleneſs of ſentiment fires
" thy youthful ſoul, and places thee far
" above the level of ſtriplings of thy
" years: now mark me; it is upwards of
" eleven years ſince a ſtranger lady, at-
" tended by a female and lacquey,
" chanced to be journeying through
" this foreſt at duſk, when they were at-
" tacked by our Chieftain and another
" of the gang then in his company.
" After a moſt deſperate conflict with
" the lady's male attendant, who moſt
" courageouſly defended her, they were
" at length ſecured by the Captain and
" his comrade, and ordered to follow
" them to this cottage; ſtill they re-
" ſiſted, and ſo far was the robber ex-
" aſperated, that the noble female would
" have fallen a ſacrifice to his brutal
" fury, had not the charms of her per-
" ſon

" ſon and the dignity of her mien greatly
" intereſted the Chieftain, who interpoſed
" and commanded his follower to ſpare
" her life; at length finding that threats
" and perſuaſions were alike fruitleſs,
" our Captain, in order to gain her
" compliance, ſeized upon the infant
" child, which was under the attendant's
" protection, and ſolemnly ſwore that
" if ſhe did not forthwith obey him, her
" harmleſs babe ſhould be conveyed
" from her ſight for ever. This dread-
" ful threat awakened every maternal
" feeling in her breaſt, and ſhe, without
" heſitation, prepared to obey the will
" of our Chieftain: already were they
" quitting the direct path that led
" through the foreſt where the conteſt
" had taken place, when the ſudden
" rapid approach of horſemen alarmed
" our leader, who nevertheleſs deter-
" mined not to relinquiſh his fair cap-
" tive and her two attendants, from

" whoſe appearance he expected a hand-
" ſome booty. Accordingly he wound
" a ſhrill blaſt from his horn to ſum-
" mon aſſiſtance, but it ſo chanced that
" only two of the gang were within
" hearing of his call, who inſtantly gal-
" lopped to the ſpot at full ſpeed, and
" arrived in time to engage the ſtran-
" gers who were ſeven in number, and
" appeared moreover well armed: the
" conteſt inſtantly commenced, and at
" the firſt onſet the two fellows who had
" gallantly obeyed the ſummons of their
" leader, were felled to the earth, and
" inſtantly expired; the third, who had
" been with his Chieftain from the firſt
" rencontre with the noble lady, received
" a dangerous wound that incapacitated
" him from all reſiſtance; thus ſituated,
" the Captain immediately ſpurred his
" horſe and fled, ſtill bearing the infant
" in his arms, being followed by his
" wounded companion. They were

" awhile

" awhile purſued by ſome of the ſtran-
" gers ; but the fleetneſs of their horſes
" did not equal that of our Chieftain;
" and being alſo unacquainted with the
" intricate mazes of the foreſt they
" abandoned the purſuit, and thus our
" leader and his wounded fellow arrived
" in ſafety at this cottage. The ſmiling
" infant was confided to my care, and
" thou, Juan, was that harmleſs babe.'

" Conceive, Condè, my aſtoniſhment
" at learning this fact. I for awhile in-
" terrupted the old woman's narrative ;
" I bathed her hand with my tears, and
" bleſſed her a thouſand times for the
" relation ; at length my feelings being
" calmed by her perſuaſion, ſhe thus
" continued :

" 'As uſual I had alſo the care of the
" wounded comrade, from whoſe lips
" I learnt this detail ; he alſo aſſured me
" that

F 2
...RAJA SERFOGI'S ...

" that thou muſt have ſprung from
" great parentage, as the Senora bore
" every mark of nobleneſs in her per-
" ſon and geſtures; he likewiſe gave
" me a full detail of the ſtrangers that
" had arrived and reſcued her, at whoſe
" appearance he affirmed the lady fell
" lifeleſs in the arms of her female
" attendant, in which ſtate they had
" been compelled to abandon her.

" 'For ſome days the poor fellow
" lingered of his wounds, and at length
" died in the arms of the Captain and
" myſelf; from that early period, Juan,
" have I reared thee; our leader knows
" not that I ever gained theſe circum-
" ſtances a tending thee from his
" wounded comrade, but conceives that
" with his death the ſecret was known
" but to himſelf, and under that idea
" hath he reared thee as his own, and
" made thee Chieftain of his fellows

" when chance or death ſhall end his
" career.

" 'Now, Juan, have I unburthened my
" ſoul to thee; thou knoweſt the terms
" on which I confided in thy ſecrecy,
" nor will I doubt thy faith. Oh!
" couldſt thou know the ſecret weight
" that hath burthened my conſcience
" during the concealment of this tale.
" —But wherefore, Juan, ſhould I tell
" thee of the horrors I have endured,
" of thoſe nightly viſions that have ap-
" palled, and ſeemingly pourtrayed thy
" mother to my fancy.—It is enough;
" my ſoul is now unburthened, and
" methinks I ſhall die in peace.'

" Thus, Condè, have I detailed the
" myſtery attending me, till the attain-
" ment of my eleventh year, at which
" period the ſtory was communicated
" to me by this old female attendant
" of the gang; in vain I preſſed to

"know the name and dignity of my "parents, ſhe was wholly unacquainted "with that fact; and thus am I a ſtran- "ger to the only knowledge which "might have proved moſt eſſential to "me. The terms of my oath of ſecreſy "being now rendered void, the ſe- "quel of my hiſtory, to the term of "our meeting, I ſhall now detail in "few words:

"Some days after this confeſſion was "made, the old woman breathed her "laſt, and at the age of ſixteen the "leader of the gang (my ſuppoſed fa- "ther) fell a victim to his own temerity "in attacking ſome travellers in the "foreſt whoſe force was far ſuperior to "his own. Thus was I left at liberty "to adopt ſuch a line of conduct as I "deemed expedient; accordingly after "the interment of the Chief of the

"robbers,

" robbers, having veſted the command " in the perſons of Lorano and Pablos, " after receiving a ſecond time the oaths " of the gang, I quitted the foreſt, and " fixed my reſidence in the village " where you, Condè, firſt diſcovered " me; having there aſſumed the appel- " lation of Ceſario. I was ſoon capti- " vated with the ſimple beauties of my " Maria, and we became united.— " With the reſt you are already ac- " quainted. I was fully conſcious how " much the love of ſway animated the " breaſts of Lorano and Pablos; and " it was ſolely this conviction that " enabled me to follow thus the bent " of my inclinations; removed from " the deteſted troop, it is true that they " firmly maintained their oaths, and " would have veſted in my hands the " ſituation of chieftain, on my attain-

 " ment

"ment of the allotted period; but they "would never have ſued me to accept "it, nor heeded my abſence from "them.

"Thus, Condè, have I explained the "ſeeming myſtery that enveloped my "conduct, and proved the truth of the "aſſertion made, when firſt you af- "forded me your kind protection."

Loſt in aſtoniſhment Rimualdo had liſtened to the ſingular relation of his friend; every incident added to his wonder, and produced a variety of ſug- geſtions that heightened Ceſario in his eſteem.

"Yes," ſaid the Condè mentally, "he is honorable, he is noble; I have "not wrongfully placed my confidence; "Ceſario is worthy the friendſhip of the "Son of Lara."

Rimualdo,

Rimualdo, preſſing the youth to his heart, renewed his vows of everlaſting eſteem, and promiſed to aid him in every ſcheme he might be led to adopt in order diſcover the ſecret of his birth. With regard to the Marques Badajos, it was finally determined that the Condè ſhould, the enſuing morning, entreat a private audience with the Spaniſh Monarch, to whom the whole ſcene of villany and blood ſhould be developed. This Rimualdo conceived the only method of bringing to punition a nobleman ſo powerful and rich as the Marques di Badajos.

Having maturely weighed every circumſtance, each retired to his couch at a late hour, revolving in his mind the ſecret workings of Providence; and truſting that Fate would at length reward the ſtruggles of Truth and Virtue.

CHAP. IV.

—— Stern Juſtice, eagle-eyed,
Pierces the boſom of the guilty wretch
And lays his hidden ſecrets bare to view.

Sad and fix'd ſits Juſtice, her left hand holds
A pair of equal balances, her right
A two-edged ſword, her eyes are quick and bright,
Ever wary and nimble to diſcern,
Her viſage lovely is yet bold and ſtern.
Unpartial maid! Unbribed virgin!
Beauteous Aſtræa! ——

Briſtly terror crowns his front; fell horror
Darts through his blood-red eyes; his look is hell;
And Gorgon-like he'd ſtrike the gazer dead.

Agitated by the variety of emotions which Ceſario's unexpected return, and his extraordinary narrative had given riſe to, the Condè Rimualdo enjoyed but little ſleep during the night; and at an early hour joined his friend in the library,

library, to partake with him of the morning's repaſt. After yielding awhile to the pleaſurable emotions which they mutually experienced at once more greeting each other, Rimualdo recommenced his inquiries relative to the ſtrange chain of events which his friend Ceſario had witneſſed; he likewiſe heard a ſecond time the detail of every circumſtance relating to his early connexion with the gang in the foreſt; yet all their mutual endeavours to aſſign a cauſe for the extraordinary conduct of the Marques di Badajos, in regard to Ceſario, proved ineffectual; the whole was enveloped in a myſtery which time could alone unravel.

The Condè at length prepared to quit his hotel, and proceed to the palace that he might obtain a private audience with the King, ere the buſineſs of the day ſhould incapacitate him from receiving the horrible recital.

Having received from the hand of Cefario the bloody fcarf, the miniature, and the tablets which recorded the chilling tale, the Condè with fervor preffed the youth to his bofom, and entering the carriage, proceeded inftantly to the Sovereign's palace.

Having made known his defire to the lords in waiting, it was immediately communicated to the Spanifh Monarch, who inftantly granted his requeft; and the Condè was forthwith conducted to the King's apartment, from which every attendant was ordered to retire.

The King welcomed the Condè with a fmile of affability; and after defiring to know the purport of his unexpected vifit, Rimualdo commenced a circumftantial detail of the method adopted to fecure his friend, and the fubfequent conduct which had been exerted towards him;

him: he then proceeded to the narrative of the dreadful facts with which chance had made the youth acquainted; after which he produced the documents that had been discovered, and read the horrid record of the Duca di Montalvan and his sister's sufferings, which the tablets so pathetically explained.

Speechless and lost in astonishment, the virtuous Monarch listened to the dreadful story; every incident of which excited those powerful feelings that arise in the breast of one who sincerely sympathizes in another's woes. At length his countenance assumed the aspect of deep thought, in which he remained intranced for some minutes, till his overcharged bosom found vent, and he exclaimed in an impassioned tone:

"Is this the Marques di Badajos? Is "this the man in whom I have confided? "into

" into whofe keeping the fecrets of the " State have been entrufted? What! " have accumulated honors been lavifhed " on a villain—a foul murderer!—— " But he fhall feel the vengeance of " infulted majefty! he fhall learn that " I can minifter dread juftice where " once I fhowered favors!—Yes, he " fhall pay the debt of blood.——I do " remember well the father of the mur- " dered Duca di Montalvan; and oft- " times have I made inquiry refpecting " his fon and heir; nay, even to this " villain have I frequently made known " my defire of witneffing his prefence " at Court; yet hath the viper with " unruffled vifage liftened to my words, " nor ever betrayed the compunctious " glow of guilt. But tell me, Sir " Condè," continued the King, turning haftily towards Rimualdo, " who and " what is this youth by whofe means

" the

[library stamp]

"the bloody myſtery is thus developed? "and what cauſe could inſtigate the "Marques's myſterious conduct towards "him? For juſtice muſt be admi-"niſtered with impartial hand; nor will "I paſs dread ſentence till in my pre-"ſence the accuſer and accuſed ſhall be "confronted. We muſt be ſlow to "decide in charges of ſo foul a nature. "Secret hatred for ſuppoſed injuries re-"ceived, has been known to rankle ſo "within the breaſt, that life has been "deemed inadequate to ſatisfy that de-"teſted fiend Revenge. Explain there-"fore, Sir Condè, every circumſtance "relative to this youth thy adopted "friend, that from the general tenor of "his character, I may be better enabled "to judge of the validity of this "dreadful accuſation."

The King pauſed; and Rimualdo, without heſitation, gave the narrative of his

his firſt interview with the youth, as well as each ſucceeding event.

Having traced every circumſtance to the period when Ceſario was ſo myſteriouſly conveyed from Toledo, and alſo given an account of the incidents that related to Conſtanza and the ſuppoſed monk Sebaſtiano, which he had witneſſed when attending his Sovereign at the chaſe in the foreſt, and in which the Marques di Badajos was ſo myſteriouſly concerned, without, however, touching upon the theme of his love for that perſecuted female.

Rimualdo then proceeded to the developement of the oath by which Ceſario had been withheld from explaining the myſtery of his connexion with the gang in the foreſt, and with which he had made his friend acquainted ſince his almoſt miraculous eſcape from the Caſtilio di Badajos.

The

The King, with increafed aftonifhment liftened to this fecond tale of wonder! and fo much did the relation operate on his foul, that he felt greatly interefted in the fate of the youth, and more convinced of the complicated fcene of villany in which the Marques di Badajos had been the chief inftrument.

Having minutely queftioned the Condè as to thofe circumftances which he had himfelf witneffed in the foreft, and likewife interrogated him as to the conduct of his adopted friend, the Monarch forthwith expreffed a defire that Cefario fhould be inftantly fummoned to the palace. To this ftep he was actuated on two accounts: the firft was the peculiar defire he felt to behold the youth whofe fate was fo myfterioufly involved: for though the Monarch, from reafons of impartial juftice, did not apparently give immediate credence to the furprizing tale he had heard, yet was he inter-

internally convinced of its validity. The ſecond cauſe that inſtigated ſuch conduct was the deſire of interrogating the youth himſelf; for ſo dreadful was the charge, and ſo powerful the perſon whom it concerned, that the King was determined to be ſole arbiter of this important matter, leaſt the Marques's power might operate in his favor, and draw down partial judgment on his head.

The Monarch's order was immediately obeyed, and a guard diſpatched to eſcort the youth Ceſario to the palace, while the Condè Rimualdo, by the King's deſire, did not for a moment quit his preſence. The youth, armed with conſcious integrity, received the mandate with calmneſs, and inſtantly quitted the Condè's hotel; from which he was conducted to the reſidence of the Spaniſh Monarch. His arrival being notified, the King commanded that he ſhould be inſtantly uſhered into his preſence;

an d

and in a few moments Cesario ſtood before his Sovereign.

The nobles that attended him being ordered to withdraw, none other ſave the Condè Rimualdo and his friend remained within the chamber. After fixing awhile the moſt ſcrutinizing gaze upon the youth, the Monarch thus addreſſed him:

" The myſtery of thy fate, young
" man, and the extraordinary and un-
" paralleled charge brought againſt the
" powerful Marques di Badajos through
" thy means, has been preferred to me
" by thy liberal patron the Condè Ri-
" mualdo. If zeal for the ſtrict admi-
" niſtration of juſtice has led thee to
" uncloak this horrid ſcene of blood,
" thou ſhalt not only ſee the guilty meet
" punition, but thou thyſelf ſhalt alſo
" experience the reward due to an
" act ſo bold and meritorious. But on
" the

"the other hand, ſhould I find thee "falter, ſhould thy charge be tainted "with malignancy, expect a puniſh-"ment, rigorous and painful—a puniſh-"ment which ſhall terminate in ig-"nominious death."

"Dread Sire," replied Ceſario, falling proſtrate at the feet of his Monarch, "I know the purport of the charge; "and with my life will I ſubſtantiate "the fact! I knew the title of the "Marques—I knew his power; yet "theſe conſiderations have not operated "on my ſoul—I place my confidence in "upright judgment—I call for retribu-"tion on the murderer's head, nor will "it be denied me. Face to face will I "confront this haughty noble, and bring "the dreadful charge againſt him! Let "my life, great Sire, be forfeit, ſhould "the ſequel prove me baſe; for ſuch a "wretch were a monſter mid the haunts "of men!"

Having

Having liſtened to Ceſario's dauntleſs words, and particularly noticed the energetic manner in which they were expreſſed, the Spaniſh Monarch then proceeded to interrogate the youth on every incident of his paſt life, and the conduct of the Marques towards him when at the Caſtilio, as well as every circumſtance that related to the diſcovery of the hidden deed of guilt. Ceſario's anſwers were collected; each word breathed truth, and more fully ſubſtantiated the atrocious act of the Marques di Badajos. Having now fully queſtioned the youth, the Condè Rimualdo was at length ſuffered to depart, while Ceſario, by the King's command, remained within the palace, in order to ſecure him from every machination that might be put in practice againſt his life.

The

The Sovereign having ſummoned two of his moſt confidential nobles, entruſted in their hands an arreſt for ſecuring the perſon of the Marques, which was to be executed ſecretly, and with the utmoſt expedition.

It will now be neceſſary to return to the Caſtilio di Badajos, and explain the conduct adopted by the Marques, after Ceſario's ſuppoſed aſſaſſination.

Reſtleſs, and torn with agony, the Marques di Badajos repaired to his apartment, after leaving Ceſario's cell, without having fulfilled the bloody purpoſe; a thouſand times he ſhuddered at the dreadful viſion which had met his frenzied eye; a thouſand times he rallied his faltering ſpirits, and curſed the hand that had ſo puſillanimouſly ſhrunk from the commiſſion of the deed. Thrice did he quit the chamber to perpetrate

petrate the murder, and as oft was he withheld by a ſecret impulſe that ſwayed his inmoſt ſoul.—At length, finding every effort fruitleſs, he ſummoned the bravo to his aid, into whoſe hand he depoſited the poinard, commiſſioning him to diſpatch the innocent and unprotected youth.

But oh! what terrors rent his breaſt! in vain he ſtretched his frame upon the downy couch; in vain he cloſed his eyes and courted renovating ſleep; the ſoothing god affrighted fled his pillow, for hell was in his mind; worn with exceſs of agony, a ſtupor overpowered him, and for a time he yielded to the lethargic charm, ſleep's counterfeit; but ſoon dire viſions roſe to chace this tranſitory oblivion of the ſenſes.—With briſtled hair, and glaring eyes, he ſtarted from the bed, then bent his gaze awhile on vacancy, and trembled as the chiming clock

clock proclaimed the matin hour. Soon did the bravo return, the Marques trembling ſtarted at his approach; he would have queſtioned, but the words died upon his lip; at length the dagger, reeking with the robber's blood, was produced; and the bravo exclaimed, "The deed is done!" The Marques, ſhuddering, ſunk upon his couch, as waving his hand he motioned the ruffian to withdraw.

Aurora from her dewy and odoriferous bed at length aroſe, and opened wide the purple gates of renovating morning; the Marques bent his eye upon the early ſtreaks that tinged the eaſt: they called forth no prayer of gratitude from his lips; his ſoul rather ſickened at the ſight; for gloomy midnight was more congenial to the temperament of his mind. The recollection of the bravo ſuddenly recurred to his fancy, when the Marques

arouſed,

aroufed, quitted his chamber, and with irrefolute ftep traverfed the apartments, and gained at length the winding ftair-cafe which conducted to the gloomy cell from which the youth Cefario had efcaped in fafety. As he gained the door of the dungeon, the clotted blood, from the wound of the murdered affaffin, ftained the pavement; the fight chilled the foul of the Marques.

"Then it is done," exclaimed he; "they have indeed executed my pur-"pofe; Cefario fleeps in death."

As he uttered thefe words, a ficknefs ftole over his frame, and he fupported his trembling limbs againft the wall of the turret. In this fituation he continued awhile, till fummoning more fortitude he advanced to the door of the dungeon; it moved beneath his touch, and he defcended into the cell; the damps and complicated horrors of his mind

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

ſtruck deep into the heart of the Marques di Badajos, and he retired ſhuddering from the gloomy ſpot. With thoughtful mien and irregular ſtep, he retraced his way to the canopied apartment, whoſe grandeur ſeemed to mock the contending horrors of his ſoul.—Surpriſed at the extraordinary abſence of the bravo who was to have received by times the Marques's order relative to his journey after the reſcued Conſtanza, he at length ſummoned one of his attendants, and bade him conduct this hired dependant of his deteſted will forthwith into his preſence.—But all in vain was the ſearch; and the exaſperated Marques learnt at length the fatal truth, that he muſt have fled the Caſtilio by night with his fellow, as neither of them were diſcoverable.—Servants were inſtantly diſpatched in every direction.—The Marques himſelf, raving, traverſed every

every chamber of the extenſive Caſtilio; but fruitleſs proved the endeavour; no where was the bravo or his companion to be found. Not heſitating for a moment in the belief that Ceſario was no more, the Marques at length ordered his ſteed to be in readineſs; and followed by a ſingle attendant, inſtantly ſet off at full ſpeed on his return to Toledo.

Without ſcarcely halting to partake the neceſſary refreſhment, the Marques travelled during that day and the ſucceeding night, and arrived at Toledo an at early hour the enſuing morning. Already had he gained the portal of his magnificent dwelling, and alighted to enter the hall, where crowds of domeſtics waited to receive him, when the two nobles who had been entruſted with the arreſt appeared, and inſtantly made

known their Sovereign's pleaſure. Statue ſtruck the Marques received theſe unwelcome tidings; but ſoon his exceſſive pride came to his aid, and he peremptorily demanded the ſight of the arreſt: it was produced, and to it appeared the well known ſignature of the King.

The Marques, ſuppreſſing the dreadful agitation of his ſoul, aſſumed a contemptuous ſmile, and exclaimed:

"It is the voice of calumny that has
"vilified my name; but I will confute
"the daring miſcreants——I obey the
"mandate, lead on, Lords, I follow
"you."

The Marques inſtantly entered the carriage that was in waiting, and was ſoon conveyed to the fortified caſtle of Toledo; where, being conducted in ſilence to the large ſuite of apartments

allotted for his confinement, he was forthwith left to indulge thoſe gloomy meditations that ruſhed impetuouſly upon his guilty ſoul.

CHAP. VI.

—Accursed jealousy!
Oh! merciless wild and unforgiving fiend!
Blindfold it runs to undistinguish'd mischief,
And murders all it meets; curs'd be its rage;
For there is none so deadly; doubly curs'd
Be all those easy fools who give it harbour;
Who turn a monster loose among mankind,
Fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence,
Baneful as death, and horrible as hell. ROWE.

No sooner had the Condè Rimualdo regained his hotel, than he instantly dispatched a letter to the Marques his father, detailing the discovered villany of the Marques di Badajos, in support of his attestations relative to Constanza. The Condè's arguments were couched in the most energetic language; for love and happiness dictated each glowing phrase. He first expatiated on those innate

innate virtues which he was fully convinced Conſtanza poſſeſſed; he detailed circumſtantially the delicacy of her conduct; and then contraſted the diabolical villanies of the powerful Marques di Badajos: and thence inferred that Conſtanza was one of thoſe perſecuted objects that had fallen a victim to his deteſted machinations. There was no circumſtance that eſcaped the Condè's recollection, which might in any reſpect withdraw the dubious veil that calumny had thrown upon her character.

Such was the contents of Rimualdo's epiſtle to the Marques his father: they tended to tranquillize his mind, and inſtil freſh fortitude into his drooping ſoul.

How different were the emotions of the Marques di Badajos! From the pinnacle of pride demeaned to the lowly

ſtate of a priſoner; left in ſilence to indulge the horrors that crowded faſt upon his imagination: no friendly voice to ſooth, no pitying tear to heal the rankling wounds of the ſoul; no being to commiſerate his fallen ſtate. Torn with the recollection of paſt deeds; trembling at the future, yet endeavouring to ſtifle theſe multifarious and contending paſſions: theſe were the emotions of the once all-powerful Marques; theſe were the goading pangs of a guilty conſcience. A thouſand times he wiſhed for death: annihilation was preferable to the torture he endured. But theſe were doctrines of a ſoul urged to deſperation; for ſtill the ſtrong conviction of a judgment hereafter flaſhed upon his brain, and drove him to madneſs. In this ſtate did the Marques continue during the tedious day, and far more dreary night.

The

The youth Ceſario, on the contrary, convinced of the uprightneſs of the conduct he had adopted, and ſhielded by the ſtrong arm of juſtice, ſpent his hours in calm ſerenity; and the raven wing of night brought pleaſing ſlumbers and enchanting viſions to his untainted imagination.

The morning after the Marques di Badajos' arreſtation, he was privately conducted to the royal palace, where the King and twelve of the principal grandees of Spain, who had been made acquainted with the affair, were aſſembled to judge on the validity of the heinous charge brought againſt the Marques.

At the upper end of the chamber, under a canopied throne, was ſeated the Spaniſh Sovereign in his robes of ſtate; the twelve nobles were placed to his

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right; and to the left the Grand Judge of the Inquiſition, and ſix learned doctors of the Criminal Court of Judicature, who were aſſembled to note down the various depoſitions brought againſt the accuſed. At the upper end of the table the Condè Rimualdo took his ſtation; while Ceſario, ſtanding on the other ſide, was directly oppoſite the perſon of the King, and open to the inquiring eyes of the whole aſſembly.

Ere the arrival of the Marques di Badajos, the Condè was firſt called upon for the recital of every occurrence that had taken place reſpecting the youth Ceſario ſince his firſt interview with him in the village. Rimualdo with the greateſt preciſion recapitulated every event that had the ſmalleſt connexion with his adopted friend down to the period of his return to Toledo, when he became acquainted with his myſterious

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abſence from the city. He likewiſe gave a narration of the extraordinary diſcovery he had made at the cave in the foreſt during the three days' chaſe in which he had been engaged with his Sovereign and the other nobles of the court. Rimualdo then alleged that, actuated with the deſire of knowing the fate of this innocent female, he had afterwards returned to the ſpot, and learning the meaſures that were to be adopted in reſpect to her, he had purſued the ſteps of her ſuppoſed father, and in the end reſcued her from his power. In the courſe of this narrative, every incident was faithfully delineated, both in reſpect to Sebaſtiano and the Marques's connexion with this myſterious tranſaction: and in ſupport of the allegation, the Condè produced the parchment ſigned by that nobleman; which proved Conſtanza to be no child of the ſuppoſed

monk Sebaſtiano, and which alſo conſigned her for ever to a monaſtery. Rimualdo then proceeded to give a detail of the vilifying letter which had been forwarded to the Caſtilio del Lara by ſome anonymous hand, branding Conſtanza with infamy, and placing his conduct in the moſt deſpicable light. He then fully explained the detriment he had thereby ſuſtained in the affections of his loved parents, and concluded with painting moſt feelingly the wretched ſtate of the forlorn and perſecuted Conſtanza, whoſe ſufferings he thought might have been augmented when left to the mercy of the exaſperated and deceived Marques del Lara.

At the concluſion of the Condè's narration, the Spaniſh Monarch inſtantly gave orders that a meſſenger ſhould be forwarded, bearing a diſpatch under his ſpecial ſignet, that no ſteps whatſo-

ever

ever ſhould be purſued in reſpect to Conſtanza, were ſhe ſtill unſhackled from the monaſtic veil with which ſhe had been a ſecond time threatened, in conſequence of the ſituation in which ſhe was involved with the Condè Rimualdo.

The Condè having received his Monarch's approbation for his gallant conduct, which was expreſſed in very warm terms. Ceſario was next called upon to ſtate every incident of his life both prior and ſubſequent to his rencontre with the Condè, who had ſo liberally become his protector.

Ceſario, with unruffled mien and reſpectful air, then entered upon the detail. Every ear was charmed with his energetic mode of expreſſion, and the ſingular circumſtances attending his fate. No timidity marked his conduct, nor did any improper boldneſs taint his man-

ners;

ners; every word, every gesture was the offspring of virtue and conscious truth.

Having brought this extraordinary train of events to the important period of his detention in the Castilio di Badajos, it was then the feelings of every one present were powerfully actuated. They felt for the dangers to which the unoffending youth had been exposed; they pitied his unprotected situation, and became greatly interested in his fate. But when the tablets were produced; when the bloody tale was developed, there was no breast but felt the yearnings of compassion; there was no tongue but cursed in silence the vile perpetrator of the bloody deed.

Cesario having at length concluded the eventful history of his life, and solemnly sworn to the truth of every allegation,

gation, was forthwith ordered from the chamber, into an adjoining room, while the Condè, attended by a noble, was alſo uſhered into a ſeparate apartment.

The King and grandees aſſembled, having deliberated for a conſiderable time on the atteſtations of the accuſers, gave orders that the Marques di Badajos ſhould be uſhered into their preſence. The mandate was inſtantly delivered into the hands of thoſe nobles who had charge of the Marques's perſon: they immediately obeyed the command, and proceeded in form to the chamber of judgment; where, having delivered up the priſoner they inſtantly retired.

At the Marques's entrance, the eyes of thoſe nobles who had ſo often ſhrunk before his frown were bent on him with looks of mingled horror and diſguſt. But if the gaze of theſe was appalling, how

how far more terrible was the look of Majesty, rayed in the garb of vengeful judgment, that pierced even to the deepest recesses of the villain's soul!— Yet notwithstanding these, and spite of the conviction of self-guilt that flashed upon his brain, the Marques, seemingly unappalled, stood before this august tribunal. Upon his visage sat a haughty and contemptuous frown. Pride was the leading characteristic of his whole deportment; and beneath that feeling was masked every emotion of the mind. How often did he check the sickening qualm of fear! How often did he stifle the yearnings of a troubled conscience! and armed with the hardihood of initiated guilt, brave the threatening peril!

After a pause of some minutes, the Monarch, in a firm tone of voice, thus addressed the Marques:

"When

"When a menial ſubject of our realm "forfeits his integrity, each fellow citi- "zen with cautious eye doth ſcan his "conduct; nor will they, till his actions "ſpeak amendment, place credence in "his faith. But when a ſtranger to the "neceſſities of lowly men—when we "behold a powerful nobleman, debaſed "by the commiſſion of the moſt diabo- "lical acts, it then behoves his Sove- "reign, and thoſe by rank his equals, "to judge his conduct, and paſs ſuch "ſentence as his crimes demand. To "your boſom, Marques, the ſecrets of "the State have been confided: and in "conſequence of your apparent inte- "grity, have I laviſhed my favors with "a liberal hand. You have been the "conſtant attendant on my perſon; and "in that capacity I fear have barred the "way to many a worthier man. Such "hath been thy ſtation; nor did we

"doubt

" doubt that guilt had ever tainted one " ſo great in title and ſo proud of blood. " What then muſt be the feelings of " thy King, on finding that a murderer " has uſurped the loftieſt ſtations in our " realm! that on a villain's head our " bounties have been ſhowered! for " in ſuch light muſt we regard thee, " Marques, unleſs thy evidence ſo fully " contradicts the abhorred tale, that we " give credence to thy aſſertions by " hurling judgment on thy accuſer's " head."

The Marques, who with folded arms and lowering eye had liſtened to this addreſs, thus replied:

" Great Sire, the actions of my life " will I uphold, and blaſt the vile de- " famer of my name. I ſtand unappalled, " and wait content the iſſue of this " ſolemn charge, be it whatſoever it " may."

Having

Having concluded this reply, an immediate order was given for the perusal of that part of Cesario's evidence which related to the charge of the murder contained in the tablets; and notwithstanding every endeavour to the contrary, the emotions of the Marques became apparent, and were visible in every gesticulation of his countenance.

The detail being ended, the Marques demanded that the accuser might be confronted with him; and in consequence, Cesario was immediately ushered into the chamber, and the Condè Rimualdo, also entering, took his seat, as before, at the upper end of the table. But who can paint the agitation of the accused on beholding the youth whose life he had so mysteriously sought, and of whose death he had till that moment been assured! A thousand sensations now rushed upon his brain: the livery of

of guilt o'erſpread his lowering viſage, and haggard horror glared through his ſunken eyes.

Again the youth, who was called upon a ſecond time, atteſted to the truth of his narration.

Once more the Condè was queſtioned as to every point that had come to his knowledge—and again his ſacred oath tended to confirm Ceſario's evidence.

A dread ſilence now reigned throughout the hall: it was the ſolemn pauſe of general expectation. At length the Sovereign roſe, and thus addreſſed the Marques:

"Your demand has been acquieſced "with: you called for the accuſer; he "now confronts you. Where are the "proofs that ſhould lead us to invalidate "his teſtimony?"

The

The Marques continued ſilent awhile: during which period he ſummoned reſolution to his aid; and as the King was on the point of renewing his interrogatory, he thus addreſſed the judges of his cauſe:

"I can bring no proof; but will relate "ſuch circumſtances as ſhall weigh in "my behalf with every Noble in whoſe "breaſt the flame of honour glows that "ſhould adorn the Spaniſh name. 'Tis "true the Duca di Montalvan's daugh-"ter was my wife; by whoſe right I "now inherit the wide poſſeſſions of "her illuſtrious race. Within my "caſtle ſhe reſided. I thought her "faith unſullied; and eſteemed myſelf "thrice bleſſed in the poſſeſſion of her "charms. But ſoon theſe joys were "changed: a ſtranger gained admiſſion "to my Caſtle. I foſtered him, and he "betrayed me! My confidential ſer-

"vants

" vants watched his conduct; and " through their means I learnt my " ſhame. Yes, my Lords, theſe eyes " beheld my wife within the villain's " arms! I would then have extermi-" nated the adultreſs and her paramour, " but was withheld. The enſuing night " I ſecretly conveyed the villain from " his chamber to a dreary cell. And " as a proof of my wife's guilt, (on " learning from my attendants that he " had diſappeared,) ſhe alſo fled the " Caſtle; and for a time eſcaped the " vigilance of my ſearch. From that " moment did I curſe the female infant " ſhe had born! from that time did I vow " eternal vengeance on the baſe off-" ſpring ſhe was then on the point " of bringing forth. Should I ever " encounter this ſecond proof of my " ſhame!—Chance at length diſcovered " the renegade and her two attendants, " whom I reſcued from the power of

" ruffians

" ruffians in a foreſt. It was from their " hands that Angela received the wound " that cauſed her death; and it was " there that her infant babe was borne " away.—On my return to the Caſtilio, " vengeance fired my boſom; and with- " in the cell where lay confined the " author of my ſhame, I placed her " reeking corſe.—He died: and 'twas " by my command.—It was the ven- " geance of an injured Spaniard: nor " do I ſhrink from the commiſſion of " the act!"

The Marques pauſed; when the King thus addreſſed him:

" If the purport of thy ſtory, Mar- " ques, were true, we ſhould then in- " deed confeſs that aggravating circum- " ſtances ſuch as are incompatible with " the ſoul of a noble Spaniard had " urged thee to the perpetration of the " bloody

" bloody act. But ſuch does not appear
" the caſe: theſe tablets proclaim thy
" wife moſt virtuous, chaſte, and true;
" and blacken thee with other deeds of
" guilt: they likewiſe name the Duca
" di Montalvan, brother of thy wife, as
" the hapleſs object that fell a victim
" to thy barbarity. How wilt thou
" confute theſe glaring facts? how can-
" cel this recital, whoſe purport once
" ſubſtantiated ſeals thy doom?"

" The tale is falſe! 'tis the deteſted
" fabrication of a villain to enſnare me!"
replied the Marques with energy: " Would
" the noble Duca have ſtooped to aſſume
" a menial diſguiſe? Would he have
" become a dependant on my will, and
" made the Caſtle of one whom he
" deteſted his habitation during the
" ſpecified term in thoſe tablets produced
" againſt me? No, no! impoſſible!—
" But even grant that ſuch might have
" been

" been the caſe, I can confront the tale; " for theſe eyes beheld the young Duca " di Montalvan dead. Scarcely had the " traducer of my fame expired, when, " poſting to my Caſtle, came one of " the domeſtics of the Duca with " tidings that his maſter was not to be " found. I ſpeeded forthwith to the " fair eſtates of the Montalvan race; " and ere the evening of the ſecond day " after my arrival there, a reeking corſe " within the neighbouring wood was " found, which, on inſpection, proved " to be the body of the Duca. Within " the chapel of his anceſtors, cloſe by " the mouldering remains of his ſire, I " ſaw the mangled form depoſited: and " thus by his death did I become the " heir of his eſtates.

" The female infant whom I placed " under the guidance of Sebaſtiano, " was the firſt fruit of my wife's incon-

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" tinence; and it was the reſemblance " of the youth who now appears againſt " me to her whom once I loved, that " led me to adopt the ſecret machina- " tions againſt his perſon; not that his " life was my intent, till urged to fury " by the determined ſilence he main- " tained as to the ſecrets of his birth. " Thus far is the myſtery of my con- " duct cleared; thus have I proved, " that if the deed was cruel, it was alſo " juſt. Is there a noble Spaniard pre- " ſent that would not act as I did when " ſtung in the tendereſt point—his " honor.—I will not for a moment " think ſo meanly of thoſe my equals " both in wealth and title—I will not " ſo far derogate the Spaniſh name. " If punition muſt be hurled upon my " head, I am prepared to meet my " fate undaunted; I am ready to fulfil " the law's beheſt, though I have acted " in the cauſe of honor and of juſtice."

The

The Marques paused, and for a considerable time a solemn silence reigned throughout the chamber: each grandee felt enhorrored at the deed, yet so far did the Spaniards' natural character predominate, that they conceived the act was just. Not so the Condè Rimualdo: he still believed the purport of the tablets true; he still conceived the Marques guilty of hidden deeds of blood; but such were not the only emotions that crowded on his soul, he also felt assured that Constanza was not the illegitimate offspring of the Marques's dishonour; he also felt convinced that his cherished friend was of noble blood, was the brother of the female he adored. But if such a recollection afforded pleasure, it was but momentary; for in Cesario he beheld the accuser of his guilty father; the thought was agonizing, and the Condè with pity bent his regard

upon the youth, in whoſe countenance he read emotions ſimilar to his own.

The Spaniſh Monarch, loſt in thought, revolved the various circumſtances over and over, ſtill undetermined in the meaſure he ſhould adopt.—At length the Marques was remanded to confinement, and freedom accorded to the youth Ceſario, who with a burſting heart quitted the chamber, accompanied by his friend, who, if he could not alleviate, at leaſt ſympathiſed in his ſufferings. The King and nobles continued awhile debating the queſtion, and at length parted without any final deciſion as to the fate of the Marques di Badajos.

CHAP. VII.

For Virtue hath a charm that will defy
The venom'd tooth of malice: and the ſting
Of the world's ſneer, and haughty man's contempt:
'Tis this upholds the poor and lowly wretch;
'Tis this which bids defiance to all ills,
And, like the gleamy radiance of the ſun,
Invigorates the drooping ſoul.

Oh, lovely Virtue! great and powerful charm!
That ne'er yet ſhrunk from peril's dire alarm!
Thou, from whoſe front beams forth a glorious ray,
Bright as the piercing eye of jocund day,
Still guide my ſteps! ſtill teach my mind to know
That from thy ſource alone true bliſs can flow!
He that in heav'n the courſe of joy wou'd run,
Should learn on earth each vicious path to ſhun.

IRRESOLUTE the Marques del Lara quitted the chamber which was allotted for Conſtanza's confinement: at every ſuggeſtion that aroſe within his boſom, the recollection of his ſon's moſt ſolemn aſſever-

asseverations flashed upon his brain, and in a great measure counteracted the vengeful thoughts that kindled in his heart. Nor was he unmindful of the conduct and general tenor of Constanza's words, which had so powerfully wrought upon his feelings; he even became desirous that her character might have been vilified, yet could not reconcile the idea of his son's situation with Constanza at the time when he had met them on the road, and borne her away from his protection.

Agitated with these suggestions, the Marques continued for some time pacing his chamber; and as the first gust of passion subsided, his ideas wandered towards the discarded and forlorn Condè Rimualdo. It was then he felt an inexpressible pang; it was then the harshness of his nature melted before the feelings arising from parental affection.—

tion.—All the excellent qualifications of his ſon ſhone forth with redoubled ſplendour, and all his ſuppoſed errors were for a time ſhrouded in oblivion. Finding it impoſſible to lull this ſoft, this thrilling emotion of the ſoul, the Marques determined to ſeek his couch, and lull, if poſſible, theſe obtruſive thoughts in the ſoft arms of downy ſleep. Already had he traverſed the chamber adjoining that in which he repoſed, when the Marqueſa's attendant appeared with a requeſt from her Lady, that her Lord would attend her in the chamber adjoining the oratory.

The Marques received the meſſage in ſilence, and after a moment's pauſe ſignified his compliance with the Marqueſa's wiſh. Shortly after the female's diſappearance, he proceeded muſing to the appointed chamber; where the Marqueſa, with a countenance expreſſive

preſſive of the greateſt anxiety, awaited his approach.

After the Condè's quitting his fond mother, warmed by the parental feelings that agitated her ſuſceptible breaſt, ſhe had diſpatched her waiting woman, that ſhe might be aſſured of her ſon's ſafe eſcape from the Caſtilio. The faithful attendant, obedient to the Marqueſa's will, had ſtrictly followed her Lady's directions; but not finding the Condè return to the great gate of the Caſtilio as expected, ſhe was on the point of retracing her ſteps through the court-yard to the Marqueſa's apartment, when the ſound of voices caught her ear, and ſhe beheld, unobſerved, the parting interview between the Marques and his ſon, which ſhe inſtantly made known to the Marqueſa; who in conſequence had again diſpatched the attendant, that ſhe might not endure the horrors

horrors of ſuſpenſe, but inſtantly learn from the Marques himſelf the whole occurrence.

As the Marques del Lara entered the apartment, the anxious and inquiring look of the trembling Marqueſa was bent upon his countenance; ſhe wiſhed yet dreaded to learn the internal workings of his mind; and ſo acute were the ſenſations ſhe experiened, that after a ſtruggle of ſome moments, during which ſhe endeavoured, but in vain, to conquer the maternal feelings of her ſoul, ſhe ſunk pale and fainting into the arms of her lord, who inſtantly ran to her aſſiſtance. Having with ſome difficulty recalled her wandering ſpirits, the Marqueſa concealed her face on the boſom of the Marques, and ſoon gave vent to a flood of tears which in ſome meaſure relieved her burthened heart.

The Marques, touched to the ſoul at the ſituation in which he beheld the Marqueſa, gently preſſed her damp cold hand, and ſeating himſelf beſide her, addreſſed her in a ſoft and feeling tone of voice:

"Whence ariſes this agitation of "thy ſpirits? why yield thus to feelings "that were never wont before to obtrude themſelves upon thy noble ſoul? "check, I beſeech thee, this burſt of "agonizing grief that ſwells within "thy boſom, and tends to unnerve the "manhood of my nature. Speak, "Marqueſa, explain the ſecret ſource "from which this agitation ſprings.— "It is Rimualdo, yes, thou haſt learnt "the diſobedience of our offspring.— "Oh! wayward, raſh, unthinking boy, "what accumulated miſeries haſt thou "heaped upon the authors of thy "being!"

The

The Marquesa was by this time perfectly recovered; she had listened with avidity to her husband's address, and noted with a thrill of ecstacy the feeling manner in which the conclusive sentence relative to the Condè had been pronounced.—She seized this favorable moment, and fixing her tearful eyes on the Marques's features with a peculiar expression of tenderness, thus replied:

"Yes, Marques, I have learnt the
"headstrong conduct of our son, I have
"this night beheld the person of him
"for whose welfare every fibre of my
"heart is actuated. He has unmasked
"each secret of his soul, he has won me
"to become an intercessor in his be-
"half."

As these words were pronounced, a gloom began to spread itself over the visage of the Marques, and he would

have interrupted the Marquesa's words, but she more fervently pressing his hand continued:

" Yet think not, Marques, that I
" will uphold any conduct that shall
" taint the honor of our house. No,
" my Lord, I have, it is true, the feel-
" ings of a mother; yet have I also an
" innate pride that will teach me to
" shun a thought that is dishonorable.
" I have promised to intercede in his
" behalf so far as prudence dictates.
" Yes, I have assured him that to my
" utmost I will endeavour to counter-
" act any hasty decision which your
" heated mind, my Lord, might lead
" you to adopt; nor can I doubt but
" you will give impartial judgment,
" and decide according as the alleged
" facts shall be indubitably proved
" against him or not.—

" But,

"But, ah! my Lord," continued the Marquesa in a more impassioned voice, "you have also seen my Rimualdo, "you have discovered him. Oh! tell "me, Marques, what has occurred, "relieve my burthened soul, unveil "this secret, as thou lovest me."

The Marques, apprehensive least the effects of the Marquesa's powerful feelings should again throw her into the same state of torpitude which she had so late experienced, instantly complied with her entreaty, by detailing every circumstance from the moment when the Condè Rimualdo rushed into the chamber of the turret, and thereby prevented the completion of the Marques's plan relative to the ill-fated Constanza. The Marques did not forget to repeat the solemn asseverations made by his son, relative to himself and the object of his adoration; neither did

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did he paſs over the detail of Conſtanza's firmneſs and apparent virtue; both which circumſtances he confeſſed had moſt powerfully wrought upon his mind. But if the Condè's aſſeverations, and Conſtanza's words and actions had operated on the Marques, the mere recital of thoſe circumſtances powerfully intereſted the ſuſceptible Marqueſa, who felt as acutely as the Marques for the honor of her ſon; though ſhe did not poſſeſs like him that ſternneſs of temper which in ſome caſes amounted to rigid harſhneſs.

No argument, no entreaty, nor tender endearment was left untried by the fond Marqueſa, in order to ſtay the immediate fulfilment of her Lord's decree relative to Conſtanza's fate. Her perſuaſive reaſonings had the deſired effect; and the Marques did not retire from the chamber till a promiſe had been

been obtained, that no immediate act of confinement in a Monaftery fhould be put in practice againft the vilified Conftanza.

With Conftanza all was peace; and fhe enjoyed that fweet ferenity of foul that fmiles at fublunary ills, occupied only in the contemplation of joys beyond the grave. Sometimes indeed her mind wandered to the perfon of the beloved Condè; it was then the rofeate tinge illumined her lily cheek; it was then her heart beat with unufual palpitation. In vain fhe ftrove to check the rifing impulfe; it was rooted in the foul, and every attempt was alike vain and fruitlefs.

Thus did the hours glide on with the all virtuous Conftanza: to her mind the limits of her chamber was a univerfe; fuch power has virtue over the mind: fuch

ſuch calm content does it diffuſe over the ſoul!

The time at length arrived, when the meſſenger bearing the Condè's packet from Toledo gained the Caſtilio del Lara. But how can words give an adequate idea of the Marques's ſenſations on learning the detail of the Marques di Badajos's villany, and the ſtrange train of circumſtances that attended the extraordinary diſcovery of the fact.—Having alſo maturely weighed the arguments of the Condè, they added weight to thoſe of the Marqueſa, and determined him more than ever to ſpare for a time the object of his ſon's adoration.

Having imparted the intelligence to the Marqueſa, ſhe was ſtruck with horror and amazement, and after glorifying

ſying the Divine workings of Providence, felt more than ever ſatisfied with the meaſures ſhe had adopted in behalf of Conſtanza and her ſon.

But if this intelligence was productive of ſurprize, how much more was the Marques thunder-ſtruck on receiving the King's mandate relative to the object of the Condè's love! Thoroughly convinced that defamation had ſlurred Conſtanza's fame, he no longer deſpiſed her as an object unworthy his regard, (not that he viewed her in the light of the future wife of his ſon,) but that ſhe was a perſecuted and helpleſs innocent.

In conſequence of this packet the Marques had a long and private conference with the Marqueſa, who obtained her Lord's permiſſion to have a ſhort interview with his female captive; and in conſequence ſhe immediately repaired to the apartment allotted to Conſtanza.

As

RAJA SERFOGI'S

As the Marquesa approached the chamber, the plaintive notes of Constanza's voice echoed through the lofty avenues; and so enchantingly sweet were the sounds, that, fearful of interrupting the soft strain, the Marquesa paused, when her ear caught these concluding stanzas:

Yet wherefore cherish secret sorrow?
  Let Hope diffuse her smiles:
From Hope one cheering ray I'll borrow,
  For mis'ry she beguiles.

The maid or youth that love-sick languish,
  And pine with secret pain;
The prisoner torn with silent anguish
  Nor sighs, nor weeps in vain.

For still sweet Hope will true love pity,
  And lull the prisoner's grief;
Hope hears the lover's plaintive ditty;
  Hope smiles, and gives relief.

As

As the dying ſound vibrated on the Marqueſa's ear, ſhe experienced a melancholy emotion that thrilled her inmoſt ſoul, and for a time incapacitated her from advancing towards the chamber. Recovering at length from this ſtate of pitying admiration, ſhe ſlowly moved forwards; and was in a few moments at the door of the apartment.

As the Marqueſa entered, Conſtanza bent her eyes upon the noble form before her; and ſo ſtrong was the reſemblance of the Marqueſa to her ſon Rimualdo, that ſhe inſtantly recognized in her the perſon of the Condè's parent. A faint bluſh ſuffuſed Conſtanza's cheek, as the Marqueſa's gaze was directed towards her features; and with timidity bending her eyes to the earth, ſhe ſunk upon her knee before the Marqueſa, who, haſtening towards her, with an encouraging voice entreated that ſhe would

riſe;

riſe; nor yield to the depreſſion of ſpirits that evidently overpowered every faculty of her ſoul.

After a ſtruggle of ſome moments, (during which Conſtanza's features underwent a variety of changes expreſſive of the ſenſations that agitated her boſom,) tears at length found vent, which in ſome meaſure calmed this internal perturbation; when ſhe thus addreſſed the Marqueſa in broken accents:

"O Madam! a conviction flaſhes on "my brain——you are—you muſt be "the honored mother of the Condè "Rimualdo; and it is that aſſurance "which quite o'erpowers my ſpirits: "for what muſt be your conjectures "concerning——Good heavens! the "bare idea inhorrors me!—Yes, in "your eyes I appear an abandoned, "fameleſs girl——you have heard "the tale from the exaſperated Mar-

"ques

"ques——you cannot waver from your "Lord's opinion; and are therefore "come to vent upon *my* wretched head "his dire diſpleaſure. Yet ſpare me, "Madam! in pity do not cruſh a miſe- "rable and unprotected creature! "Grant me a hearing; but do not "adjudge me falſe, ere the charges "wherewith I am tainted be proved— "ere my apparent guilty conduct with "your ſon be inveſtigated!"

Quite o'erpowered, Conſtanza pauſed; and falling back ſome paces, threw herſelf almoſt fainting on the ſeat.

The Marqueſa, touched to the ſoul, placed herſelf beſide her; and with the utmoſt ſolicitude depicted on her countenance, again entreated that ſhe would calm the agitation of her ſpirits; and then continued:

"You

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"You have divined truly; I am in-
"deed the Marquesa; I am that mother
"who has felt unutterable agonies on
"account of the supposed misconduct
"of my son; for such I am convinced
"it was, both from intelligence received
"and from the characteristic stamp of
"virtue which is delineated on your
"countenance. Alas, my Rimualdo! I
"am not astonished at thy prepossession
"in favor of this unprotected creature!
"but ah! too fatal passion! what mise-
"ries wilt thou produce!—I dread the
"consequences of my Rimualdo's ardent
"affection—I feel, Constanza, for thy
"hapless lot; for never must he call thee
"his——Hadst thou proved noble, the
"lack of fortune would have been of no
"consideration; but the disparity of thy
"blood precludes every hope. I come
"not to taunt thy wretchedness, Con-
"stanza, but give thee such consolation

"as

"as ſprings from a feeling heart. I "come to ſtrengthen thy mind, and "prepare thee to endure an eternal "ſeparation from my ſon; for never "muſt you meet again. In no reſpect "ſhall the rigid law of rectitude be "ſtrained: you ſhall plan the line of "your future conduct; you ſhall be "protected by me; but you muſt ſecrete "yourſelf for ever from the Condè's "ſight."

Conſtanza, overpowered with the Marqueſa's gentleneſs, fervently preſſed her hand within hers, and bathed it with a flood of tears that ſprung from an exceſs of gratitude; the Marqueſa alſo became violently agitated.

"Do not overpower me, Madam!" exclaimed Conſtanza; "I allow the "juſtneſs of the decree. Yes, I will "confeſs this heart adores your ſon: "and though his image never will be "eraſed

"erafed from the tablet of my foul, "yet will I convince you how far I can "fubdue a paffion which never fhould "have taken root in my breaft.—By "you, Madam, will I be guided—your "generofity has overpowered me—I "yield myfelf to your will——do with "me as your wifdom fhall feem meet."

The Marquefa could no longer refift the warm impulfe that fwelled her foul: fhe preffed Conftanza to her bofom; and finding it impoffible to prolong a converfation fo painful to both, rufhed from the apartment while Conftanza, breathing bleffings on her head, forgot awhile the pangs of haplefs love, in the full guft of veneration and gratitude which fhe felt for the character of the noble Marquefa.

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CHAP. VIII.

I'll clear the myſtery ; I'll bring forth truths
That ſway th' immortal ſoul ; I will diſprove
And root the canker clean from out his breaſt :
Then let him rail, and call dread vengeance down :
Let the keen malice of his jaundic'd eye
Still glare upon me—I heed it not.
Then let him vaunt his ſtubborn properties ;
Let him exult, and feed on 's own rancour ;
Let him contemn thoſe feelings which approach
E'en to the throne of Bleſs'd Omnipotence—
I envy not his callous nature.

——— Yet hold !
Rail not againſt this man ; the day ſhall come
When Sorrow's ſting ſhall pierce his flinty heart,
Oh, Mercy ! ſhield him in thy foſt'ring arms ;
Teach him forgiveneſs here below, leſt he
Should vainly ſeek it in the world to come.

IMPRESSED with the ſame painful ideas which had wrung Ceſario's ſupceptible breaſt on acquiring the dread intelligence relative to the murdered Marqueſa

 his

his apparent mother and the Duca di Montalvan, he repaired with his friend the Condè to the hotel. In vain did Rimualdo endeavour to comfort him, and breathe the soothing language of sincerest friendship; every effort was futile; for the youth internally felt a dread conviction, notwithstanding the Marques's attestations to the contrary, that the alleged betrayer of his supposed mother's honor was no other than the disguised Duca di Montalvan her brother.

"If so," exclaimed the enhorrored youth, "it is, perhaps, my father on "whose head I seek to draw down "judgment! Already I behold his "bleeding corse! his spirit cries for "vengeance on his persecuting off-"spring!"

Such were the ideas that passed with inconceivable rapidity before Cesario's sickened

ſickened imagination, till he at length ſunk into a ſtate of inſenſibility. With claſped hands, down-caſt eyes, and a look of peculiar dejection, he appeared loſt in thought, and unconſcious of every object or motion that paſſed around him. The Condè with the utmoſt ſolicitude gazed upon his features, and addreſſed him; but all in vain: he bathed his hands with tears; but their moiſture excited no ſuch emotions in the boſom of the youth! Finding every effort to rouſe him alike ineffectual, the Condè at length diſpatched Gerardo for medical advice; and Rimualdo ſoon learnt the painful account of Ceſario's dangerous ſtate; as it was the phyſician's opinion, when in part acquainted with the nature of the caſe, that owing to the exceſſive ſenſibility of Ceſario's mind he had ſo far yielded to the accumulated melancholy that preyed upon his ſoul, that, without the utmoſt precaution, a

I 2 privation

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privation of every intellectual faculty would undoubtedly take place.

The Condè, however painful it was to his feelings, by the physician's order was compelled to leave the chamber; when such measures were immediately adopted as were deemed requisite for the emergency of the case.

Freed from the inquiring eye of observation, Rimualdo yielded to the full gust of grief that swelled his inmost soul. Love and friendship, these all-potent ties, by turns usurped their empire o'er his heart: the one gave rise to all those pangs that agitate the bosom of a sincere lover; the other touched the more refined cords of the soul, and produced the excess of sympathy and sorrow.

At length the Condè, more composed, began to retrace the strange succession of events

events which had befallen him ſince the firſt parting with his beloved parents at the Caſtilio del Lara. This brought him to the moment when he ſought ſhelter, during the night, within the friendly convent's walls where he had met the monk Auguſtino, with whoſe appearance and manners he had been ſo peculiarly ſtruck. The recital of that father's ſufferings, which, from the multiplicity of events that had ſince occurred, had remained unopened in the Condè's poſſeſſion, now came to his recollection for the firſt time; and he immediately took the ſcroll from the eſcrutoire in which he had depoſited it, and having unfolded the paper, read as follows:

"*The Life of* DON GASPAR ARZINI,
"*now* FATHER AUGUSTINO.

"IT is the ſtrong impreſſion which you, "Senor Condè, though a total ſtranger,

" have made upon my mind, that in-
" fluences my conduct on the present
" occasion. The story of my life is
" simple; and it is the susceptible breast
" alone that can in any degree feel for
" the sufferings which I have mentally
" endured. Till you, Senor, presented
" yourself I never had beheld an object
" to whose breast I would unveil my
" sorrows: and I had thought to con-
" sign them in eternal oblivion: but
" Heaven's will be done! you have
" drawn the secret from me: my heart
" obeys with joy the impulse which
" you have given rise to; and thus I
" lay the history of my miseries before
" you.

" I am the only son of Don Frede-
" rigo Arzini, a gentleman of noble
" blood, but not much gifted with the
" smiles of fortune: for twenty years he
" served his country with unblemished

"fame; and died with the wounds he "had received in a hard-fought battle, "a ſhort time after my birth, while "attending the duties of his regiment "againſt the enemy on the borders of "Spain. The year preceding his death, "my mother had alſo given him a fe-"male infant: and thus was my help-"leſs ſiſter and myſelf left to the ſole "protection of the kindeſt and beſt of "mothers.

"Poſſeſſed of little but the widow's "pay, which devolved to my remaining "parent on my father's deceaſe, it was "with difficulty ſhe maintained the "only objects that rendered life a bleſſ-"ing to her. 'Tis true we never taſted "thoſe bleſſings which riches afforded; "but we were reared in the arms of "ſincereſt love; we were cheriſhed by "the fond object that gave us being; "and we, in return, felt with our ripen-

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“ ing years the potent ties of affection “ that ſhould always animate the boſom “ of a child; and lead it to reverence “ next to the Divinity that object to “ whom it owes exiſtence.

“ Thus did the term elapſe till dawn- “ ing manhood threw its intellectual “ radiance on my mind: 'twas then my “ ſiſter and myſelf firſt heard the cir- “ cumſtantial detail of my parent's “ death from the lips of our beloved “ mother; whoſe ſoul was wrung by “ the remembrance of thoſe days of “ bliſs ſhe had once experienced with “ him: 'twas then we alſo learnt our “ lowly ſituation, and the wretched ſtate “ of dependence which muſt unavoida- “ bly await us at the deceaſe of our “ mother; with whoſe life expired the “ wretched penſion ſhe received, and “ with it all our happineſs.

“ Fired

" Fired to the ſoul, I oftentimes ad-
" dreſſed my ſiſter on the ſubject neareſt
" my heart. I could not bear to be a
" burden to my mother; and anxiouſly
" deſired to rank myſelf one amidſt the
" protectors of our country.

" My mother ſoon obſerved the
" reſtleſneſs of my diſpoſition; and,
" in conſequence, queſtioned me as
" to the internal motive that in-
" ſtigated my conduct. For ſome
" time I reſiſted theſe frequent impor-
" tunities, till melted by the tears which
" my fond parent ſhed, I frankly made
" avowal of my wiſh, and on my
" knees entreated her compliance. She
" felt the motive that actuated me, and
" applauded the noble pride of blood
" which, ſhe ſaid, I had inherited from
" my father. Yet, notwithſtanding
" thoſe ſenſations, ſhe alſo experienced
" the feelings which ſhould ever actuate

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"a mother's breast Already she had "lost a loved husband in the service "of his King and Country; and could "she suffer the only male offspring that "remained to cherish her declining life "—could she expose him to those perils "which he had so often escaped, and to "which he had, in the end, fallen a "victim: —the thought was too agoniz- "ing for endurance; and so powerfully "were her feelings wrought upon, that "she even knelt before me; and in the "end, drew forth a sacred vow, that I "would never enlist under the military "banners of my country.

"From this moment she, for a time, "wore an appearance of cheerfulness, "and was apparently mending in her "health, which had been much shaken "by sorrow; but the omen was, alas! "fallacious, it was the momentary joy "that effected for awhile this favorable

"amend-

"amendment, which on a ſudden vaniſhed, and ſhe became plunged in "ſickneſs and a total decline of conſtitution My ſiſter and myſelf afforded "every relief in our power, and by "the moſt unremitting aſſiduity, pro- "longed for a while the dread blow "that was at once to bereave us of "hope and happineſs.

"The dire moment at length arrived; "the emaciated form of our mother "lay before us; on one ſide of the bed "my ſiſter bathed her damp hand with "tears, on the other I, kneeling, fer- "vently preſſed that which was claſped "within my own; and, in an agony of "mind unſpeakable, gazed upon her "countenance; where death's pale robe "was already ſpread, and where thoſe "once expreſſive eyes were upward "turned, dim and luſterleſs. I watched "the difficult ſuſpiration of her breath,

" I addreſſed her in broken accents; for
" a moment ſhe turned her eyes upon
" me, and would fain have ſpoken, but
" all articulation was ſtopped, ſhe faintly
" preſſed my hand, her eyes reſumed
" their wonted upward gaze; her hand
" turned icy cold, her lip fell, and with-
" out a ſtruggle or a ſigh of agony,
" ſhe paid the debt of Nature.

" I need not, Senor, endeavour to
" paint my emotions on ſuch an occa-
" ſion, nor will I renew the poignant
" ſenſations which I now experience,
" by painting the agonies of my loved
" Margarita's ſoul. During the live
" long day our eyes were dimmed with
" tears, our hearts were torn with an-
" guiſh; by night I heard her deep
" fetched groans, which were in uniſon
" with thoſe that burſt from my bo-
" ſom.

" In

" In this ſtate did we continue till
" the expiration of the alotted term,
" my duty, my ature, my love,
" prompted me to pay the laſt ſad tri-
" bute; but I would have given worlds
" to indulge my grief in ſilence and in
" ſecret. I heard the tolling bell; each
" vibration ſtruck deep into my heart,
" the ſolemn requiem ſounded in my
" ear, the pious prayer elevated my
" wrapt ſoul, and filled me with a ſacred
" religious awe. I followed the breath-
" leſs form I loved; I ſaw it placed
" amid departed relics long ſince moul-
" dered into duſt. I would expreſs the
" feelings of my ſoul at that ſad mo-
" ment; they are ſtill preſent to my
" imagination, which is ever awake to the
" keen thrill of agony.——But where-
" fore thus intrude my ſorrows on a
" ſtranger's ear; I will cloſe this ſcene
" of death, and to the ſequel of my
" wretched ſtory."

" Hard

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" Hard by the lowly village that had
" reared us, roſe the proud turrets of
" the ancient Lord that ſwayed the wide
" domain: oftimes had my loved ſiſter
" and myſelf, in happier days, ſtrayed
" through the antique foreſt that ſur-
" rounded its rugged walls; and as we
" contemplated the ſtupendous fabric,
" our youthful minds had formed innu-
" merable conjectures, both in regard to
" the ſplendour of its interior and the
" pride of its inhabitants. Alas! at that
" period I little knew that it would one
" day prove an aſylum for my ſiſter, and
" that a lovely object within it would, by
" inſpiring a hapleſs paſſion, embitter for
" ever the term of my exiſtence.

" The deceaſe of my revered parent
" was felt throughout the village; for
" though ſcanty her means, ſtill ſhe had
" ever found enough to ſupply our ne-
" ceſſities, and yield ſome degree of
" com-

" comfort to the lowly and unfortunate. " There was no peaſant but bleſſed her; " no mother but offered up an oriſon " for her departed ſpirit, and pitied the " forlorn ſituation of my ſiſter and my- " ſelf; and ſo general became the report, " that it ſoon gained even the ear of the " Duca and his angelic daughter, who " immediately determined on ſummon- " ing us to the Caſtle; and ſhould the " favourable reports with reſpect to us " prove juſt, he determined on adopting " ſome plan for our future welfare.

" In conſequence of this beneficent " intention, a domeſtic of the Duca was " diſpatched to the village; and on his " arrival at our cottage we were made " acquainted with our Lord's deſire, and " accordingly prepared without heſita- " ſion to obey his will. We were ſoon " in readineſs, when the attendant, fol- " lowed by myſelf and my dejected

" ſiſter,

" ſiſter, who hung upon my arm, pro-
" ceeded with ſlow ſtep towards the
" Caſtilio.

" As we paſſed the bridge and lofty
" portal on which we had ſo often gazed
" with awful wonder, a degree of trepi-
" dation ſeized the timid ſoul of my
" dejected ſiſter; and it was with diffi-
" culty that ſhe traverſed the hall and
" numerous chambers which led to the
" Duca's apartment, though I exerted
" every endeavour to fortify her drooping
" ſpirits. We were at length uſhered
" into his preſence.

" The Duca, arrayed in the ſumptuous
" veſtments ſuited to his elevated rank,
" was reclining on a ſettee; whilſt beſide
" him ſat the lovelieſt female form that
" ever the warm imagination of a lover
" conceived, or the chaſte hand of Nature
" formed! She had been reading for
" the old Duca's amuſement; but on our
" being

" being anounced had thrown aside the " book, and with eyes bent towards the " door, appeared anxiously waiting our " approach.—O heavens! Senor, never " shall I forget that pleasing, that fatal " moment! 'twas then an unknown fire " secretly glowed throughout my inter- " nal frame—'twas then an affection su- " perior to that of a son or a brother " was awakened in my breast—yes! " I felt (yet knew it not) the glowing " effusions of an unaccountable passion; " for from that moment I became the " slave of love!

" My sister, on the contrary, whose " emotions had been so powerfully " worked upon, now yielded to the pres- " sure of those sensations that agitated " her mind, and sunk pale and fainting " in my arms. Like a pitying angel " the lovely form before me sprang to- " wards her. Yes, Senor, the Duca's

" daughter

" daughter deigned to aſſiſt and comfort " her ſorrows! for after having in ſome " meaſure revived her, ſhe led my ſiſter " from the chamber; and thus I was left " to anſwer the inquiries of the noble " Duca.

" But alas! how ill was I at that mo- " ment calculated to fulfil ſuch a taſk! " for if the firſt glance had ſo power- " fully enchained my ſoul, how was that " emotion augmented on witneſſing the " feeling generoſity of the being that had " ſo charmed me. Oh, Senor! I was " all admiration, love, and ecſtacy!

" Having anſwered the Duca's va- " rious queſtionings with a trepida- " tion which was conſtrued by him as " the effect of fear, he was perfectly " ſatisfied, and ſeemed to have imbibed " for me a peculiar partiality. After " inquiring the bent of my inclination,

" I made

"I made known the early love of arms "that had inſpired me; and then de- "ſcribed the oath made to my departed "parent, by which I conceived myſelf "bound never to follow its dictates: he "applauded my firm reſolution, and "concluded by aſſuring me, that ſince "my education, my family, and man- "ners were not unworthy his notice, he "ſhould place both my ſiſter and my- "ſelf under his immediate care: and in "conſequence I was appointed his pri- "vate ſecretary; and my ſiſter by her "gentleneſs of manners and the affection "ſhe had excited in the breaſt of the "Duca's daughter, became the confi- "dante and conſtant companion of the "adored Angela.

"A period of ſome months thus "elapſed—I had completely obtained "the good opinion and confidence of "my protector; and it was this circum-

"ſtance

...RAJA SERFOGI'S...

" ſtance which in my mind rendered " the paſſion which I in ſecret cheriſhed " for his lovely daughter even more " culpable, as I knew that the alliance " was incompatible with reaſon and the " high opinions of anceſtry and noble- " neſs of blood which were cheriſhed by " the Duca.

" I brought every argument to my " fancy which gratitude, honor, and juſ- " tice could ſuggeſt; I combated with " reſolution the corroding ſhaft that " rankled in my ſoul, and embittered " every moment of exiſtence: but all my " virtuous reſolutions failed; for my " reaſon told me that fate had irrevok- " ably ſealed my doom. Thus con- " vinced of the futility of my endea- " vours, I voluntarily gave myſelf up to " love: but never did the fatal truth " eſcape my lips; I cheriſhed it in ſecret; " a melancholy dejection marked my

" ſpirits.

" ſpirits. It was at firſt noticed, but " ſoon became habitual to all within the " Caſtle, and was deemed the natural " effect of conſtitution.

" News at length arrived that the ſon " of the Duca having obtained leave of " abſence for a period from the com- " manding officer of the King's body " guard, would ſhortly repair to the " Caſtilio, accompanied by another " young nobleman of the army, who " had been the companion of his juvenine " days, and was now the friend and " confident of his ripened years. The " neceſſary preparations were accordingly " made, and at the appointed day the " old Duca took to his arms the only ſon " and heir of the immenſe poſſeſſions " of the Montalvan race."

" Merciful heaven!" exclaimed the Condè, dropping the paper in aſtoniſh- ment, " this tale of the monk Auguſtino

" relates

"relates to the murdered Angela! and "will, perhaps, throw a light upon the "myſtery that envelopes the bloody con- "duct of the Duca di Badajos."

Rimualdo inſtantly raiſing the manuſcripts, continued the recital with the utmoſt avidity, as follows:

"But ah, Senor! what words— "what imagination can conceive the "pangs that ſhortly rent my boſom! "I had not only the flame of hapleſs "love to bear, but the accumulated "miſery of beholding a rival beloved "by the object of my fervent adoration! "Yes, Sir Condè, this choſen friend of "Angela's brother was warmed with the "ſame paſſion with which I was in- "ſpired. The young Duca befriended "his love, and theſe eyes conſtantly wit- "neſſed their mutual return of affection. "The Duca di Montalvan was ſoon "appriſed of the fact by his ſon: he at

"firſt

" first rejected the suit, conceiving the " alliance altogether inadequate to the " expectations he had formed—nay, I " was privately consulted by my patron. " —What an opportunity of revenge " then presented itself to a forlorn wretch " like me! I abhorred the detestable " idea; and though my nature would " not permit me to urge the alliance, I " nevertheless spoke of Angela's love " for the friend of his son; nor did I " deign to vilify the conduct of the " youth; but even agreed in applauding " those excellent qualifications which " the young Duca had attributed to " him.

" The extreme of misery was shortly " my lot; for the Duca's consent was " gained, and it was finally agreed that " Angela should become the bride of the " young Duca's friend, who in conse-" quence soon quitted the Castilio to

" arrange

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" arrange his family affairs; after which " the ſolemnization of the ceremony was " to have taken place.

" Never will the recollection of their " parting be obliterated from my ſoul: " I even pitied my Angela and happy " rival: for ſuch were the violence of " their emotions that I felt aſſured their " paſſion was powerful as my own. But I " was not the only prey to the exceſs of " ſorrow; ſcarcely was the night and the " ſucceeding day from his departure elapſ- " ed, when the young Duca by a peremp- " tory command was ordered to join his " regiment. Thus Angela's miſery be- " came more acute; ſhe yielded unre- " ſiſtingly to the full guſt of grief; nor " did my ſiſter's endeavours to alleviate " her woe prove of the leaſt effect.

" How did my ſoul pant to offer ſome " conſolation to the object of my love!

" How

“ How often did I enter the apartment, “ where, ſupported by my ſiſter, the “ tears of anguiſh flowed from her fixed “ eyes! yet ſuch was my reſolution, that “ I conquered the deſire, leſt my ardent “ affection ſhould have prompted me “ to unveil the real myſtery of my “ ſoul.

“ Now, Senor, draws on the fatal “ criſis of my tale. But ah! if painful “ to me the recital, how much more “ agonizing muſt the reality have proved “ to the ſuſceptible ſoul of Angela! A “ powerful grandee, the ſon of him who “ had in youth been the ſworn friend of “ the Duca di Montalvan, but who was “ now no more, journeying towards his “ fair eſtates, made halt at the Caſtilio. “ The old Duca received him nobly, in “ remembrance of his departed ſire. I “ liked not the ſtranger; for a forbid- “ ding haughtineſs characteriſed his de-

" meanour: neither was my diſlike
" diminiſhed on diſcovering that he
" ſought an alliance with my benefac-
" tor's child, the betrothed Angela:
" But if my feelings were irritated on
" this account, how much were they
" augmented on finding that his title,
" wealth, and power had operated on
" the Duca's mind ſo far, that he re-
" greted the promiſe made to the friend
" of his ſon, and would moſt willingly
" have cancelled it, could he have ſo
" done with any degree of honor.

" As uſual, the Duca opened his ſoul
" to me, expreſſing in the warmeſt terms
" his regret and diſappointment. I
" ſtrove againſt the torrent that over-
" whelmed his ſoul, and ſtifled the feel-
" ings of nature and humanity, till,
" having fruitleſsly brought down his
" rage upon my head, I was commanded
" to

"to remain ſilent on the ſubject, or
"dread his eternal hatred and reſentment.

"The day previous to that on which
"Angela's intended Lord was expected
"to arrive, brought the melancholy tid-
"ings to the Caſtilio, that, haſtening on
"his return to receive his deſtined bride,
"the youth by night had been attacked
"and murdered within the receſſes of
"a gloomy wood. Oh, that I could
"reſtrain thoſe ſtrong ideas that then
"pervaded my imagination, and which
"now recur to my recollection with
"redoubled force! But peace be to the
"dead! and may Almighty mercy be
"extended to the horrid perpetrators
"of the act, whatever may have been
"their aim in compaſſing the noble
"Cavaliero's death!

"Angela, almoſt bereft of reaſon,
"heard the dread recital: her agonies ex-

" ceed the power of language to exprefs!
" Yet, fpite of thefe appearances,
" the pitilefs Marques urged his fuit
" anew; and the more unfeeling Duca
" liftened to him with fatisfaction, and
" yielded to his defire. From that mo-
" ment I forgot my patron's favors, fince
" he difclaimed every feeling that fhould
" adorn the parent's foul. The hateful
" bafilifk feemed more grateful to my
" fight than the perfon of fuch a father;
" and I determined on quitting the Caf-
" tilio without delay.

" Warmed with thefe emotions, I pri-
" vately made known my determination
" to my beloved fifter: fhe joined me
" in execrating the Duca's barbarity,
" and freely communicated the hatred
" fhe had imbibed for the haughty and
" unfeeling Marques di Badajos: ftill
" fuch was the fincerity of her affection
" for Angela that fhe determined not to
" quit

" quit her; and so far did her persuasive " arguments work upon my soul, that " I promised to ingratiate myself " with the Marques, and, if possible, " gain a situation in his household, that " thus I might reside beneath the same " roof with Angela, and be near the per- " son of my sister to console her with " the sincerity of my affection.

" I immediately adopted plans, which, " however painful and disgusting to my " feelings, effectually succeeded: I ob- " tained the good opinion of the Mar- " ques, and was promised a situation in " his Castilio.

" Thus did the term elapse till An- " gela's doom was irrevocably fixed by " becoming the wife of the Marques. " I could not be present at the sacri- " legious act; but learnt from my sister " the agonies of Angela's mind, which

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" had nearly bereft her of a life destined " to future misery.

" The Marques di Badajos, proud of " the accumulated wealth that thus de- " volved to his family, soon prepared to " return to his estates. In vain did the " old Duca petition his longer residence " at the Castilio—in vain did he allege " that Angela was the comfort of his " declining years: his arguments passed " unheeded; and with the sorrow which " he experienced at the separation from " his child, he first felt the keen pang " of regret at his conduct to his " daughter.

" I was one among the numerous per- " sons in the retinue of the Marques: a " secret sorrow stole o'er my heart on quit- " ting the Castilio; and, though unworthy, " I still pitied the Duca from my inmost " soul. By slow journeys we gained at " length

" length the lands and fortified Caſtle " of Badajos; whoſe gloomy halls and " chambers petrified my heart.

" Here I had daily interviews with " my ſiſter, who deſcribed the dreadful " ſtate of Angela's mind; which was fully " verified by the altered appearance in " her features, and the dejection that " overwhelmed her.

" Some months elapſed when a report " was ſpread throughout the Caſtilio that a " ſtranger had arrived poſt from the Duca's " Caſtle with diſpatches for the Marques: " the tidings were ſpeedily confirmed; for " it was ſoon after known that the meſ- " ſenger brought the heavy news of the " death of the old Duca the Marqueſa's " father. I experienced a ſadneſs at my " heart when the detail was confirmed: " the Duca's conduct to Angela was " buried with him in the grave; and I " remembered nothing but his kindneſs

" in affording my ſiſter and myſelf his " protection after the deceaſe of our " beloved parent.

" The day elapſed ere I caught a " glimpſe of this ſuppoſed meſſenger, " or found an opportunity of converſing " with my ſiſter on the melancholy " tidings. I was retiring as uſual to my " chamber, when ſuddenly the well- " known accents of her voice caught " my ear: I pauſed; and looking round, " ſhe beckoned me to follow her: I " obeyed in ſilence; and was conducted " to the antiroom adjoining the Mar- " queſa's apartment. My firſt inquiries " were relative to the death of the Duca, " which having heard confirmed from " my ſiſter's mouth, ſhe continued her " converſation as follows:

" 'But this, my dear brother, was " not the ſole cauſe of my requiring the " preſent interview: it was by the Mar-

" queſa's

"quesa's desire that I sought this secret "method of conversing with you, lest "any unguarded conduct, in case of "surprize, should lead you to develope "the secret which I am now going to "confide to you. Know then, my dear "Arzini, that the supposed messenger "who brought this heavy detail of the "Duca's death, is no other than his own "son, who, under the disguise of a "dependant of the late Duca, has "sought his unhappy sister Angela, "having cause to fear the machinations "of the Marques, should he be known, "and also disdaining the idea of ever "meeting the wretch who has destined "his sister to misery—that wretch "whom he also conjectures was the "cause of his friend's murder, and whose "unfeeling conduct hastened the death "of his too haughty father.—As none "in the Castilio, save myself and you,

" have any knowledge of his perſon, " the ſecret muſt remain buried in " our breaſts; as the young Duca, " touched to the ſoul at his ſiſter's ſuf- " ferings, has ſubmitted to make this " hated manſion his reſidence for ſome " length of time, in order that he may " ſecretly offer conſolation to her whom " he cheriſhes in his boſom with true " fraternal tenderneſs.'

" With this ſurpriſing intelligence, I " haſtened to my chamber; and on the " following day had ocular demonſtra- " tion of the veracity of my ſiſter's " words. The Duca, unobſerved, no- " ticed me; and I had ſufficient time " to ſwear eternal ſecreſy, and promiſe " my poor endeavours to ſerve him.

" From that period I was conſtantly " employed in planning their ſecret in- " terviews; ſuch conduct being abſo- " lutely

" lutely eſſential, owing to the jealouſy " and ſuſpicious temper of the Mar- " ques.

" In the courſe of a ſhort time after " the diſguiſed Duca's arrival at the " Caſtilio, the Marqueſa his ſiſter was " delivered of a female infant: never was " cherub more divinely beautiful! it " was the idol of the mother, whom I " ſtill adored with undiminiſhed fervor; " it was the object of the young Duca's " careſſes, who, ſtruck with the reſem- " blance it bore his Angela, forgot, in " contemplating its harmleſs features, " the cruelty of the Marques its father."

As the Condè concluded this ſentence, he was compelled to make a pauſe; for it was now evident that the Marques had wrongfully adjudged Angela, whoſe alleged criminality was now fully cleared. Rimualdo, raiſing his hands, adored the overruling power of fate,

which thus imperceptibly brought to light the hidden ſcene of guilt and bloodſhed. After yielding awhile to the ſuggeſtions which aroſe in his breaſt, the Condè thus continued:

" Thus did weeks and months glide
" on. Oftimes the Duca was deſirous
" to quit the reſidence of the Marques;
" yet the tears of his Angela ſwayed his
" purpoſe, and ſtill detained him at the
" Caſtilio. Again the Marqueſa diſ-
" played viſible ſigns of pregnancy;
" which circumſtance tended to detain
" the Duca; whoſe ſole affection and
" life ſeemed dedicated to his virtuous
" ſiſter—the object of my love.

" When ſeven months had tranſpired
" from the birth of the female infant,
" the conduct of the Marques became
" more ſullen and moroſe: He was
" often

"often abſent from the Caſtilio; and at "his return, the wonted gloom of his "countenance ſeemed more forbidding "than before. I noted well the changes, "and my mind foreboded ſome dire "event. Towards the Marqueſa he "endeavoured to aſſume an unuſual air "of kindneſs; yet I perceived that his "conduct ſprung not from the genuine "emotions of the ſoul, but was the off-"ſpring of treachery; and that beneath "this ſeeming ſmile of ſatisfaction "lurked the malignant grin of hatred "and diſguſt.

"In vain I endeavoured to forewarn "the young Duca or my ſiſter of thoſe "apprehenſions—I obtained no oppor-"tunity: and this circumſtance aug-"mented my fears; as it was apparent "that this conduct was not the effect of "chance, but deſign. Thus lulled in "falſe ſecurity, the Duca and his gentle "ſiſter

" ſiſter felt an alleviation of their ſuffer-
" ings; for they implicitly gave cre-
" dence to the aſſumed affection of the
" Marques.

" At the expiration of the eighth
" month from the birth of the female
" child, three ſtrangers were admitted
" into the Caſtilio, whoſe appearance
" was by no means prepoſſeſſing. They
" were frequently engaged in private
" with the Marques; and if my mind
" forebodes juſtly, they were the inſtru-
" ments deſigned to accompliſh his
" abominable plans.

" Ever watchful both on account of
" the Duca and his ſiſter's ſafety, I took
" heedful note of all their actions. Some
" ſhort time after the arrival of thoſe men,
" I had been one day particularly buſied
" in endeavouring to learn any fact which
" might lead to a developement of the
" myſterious

" myſterious proceedings which were evi-
" dently tranſacting in the Caſtilio—the
" hour of eight had tolled from the turret
" —as ſeated in my chamber that over-
" looked the ſouthern rampart, I was
" conſidering theſe events, when I heard
" beneath the voice of the Marques.
" Determined to eſcape obſervation, I
" withdrew from the window; but never-
" theleſs bent an attentive ear to all that
" paſſed.

" 'Let it be midnight,' exclaimed
" the Marques; 'bear the villain Hu-
" berto as I directed: as for the other
" wretch, ſtrike home, and terminate at
" once her life and the damned offspring
" which ſhe bears.'

" The ſounds then died away. I cau-
" tiouſly ſtole a glance through the
" lattice, and beheld the receding forms
" of the Marques and the three ſtrangers,
" who ſoon wound round the projecting
" buttreſs

“ buttreſs of an adjoining turret, and
“ inſtantly diſappeared.

“ Forcibly ſtruck with the words I
“ had heard, which evidently appertained
“ to the Marqueſa and her brother, I
“ determined on boldly riſking my life
“ for the preſervation of theirs. Quit-
“ ting my chamber, I immediately haſ-
“ tened to the apartment occupied by
“ my ſiſter, adjoining the Marqueſa's;
“ but they were abſent on their accuſ-
“ tomed evening walk in the private
“ garden of the Caſtilio. I then pro-
“ ceeded to the chamber of the Duca;
“ but he was not to be found; from which
“ circumſtance I concluded that they
“ had contrived ſome private interview,
“ and were, as uſual, indulging in thoſe
“ pleaſurable converſations which more
“ endeared them to each other, and ren-
“ dered Angela's exiſtence no longer
“ burdenſome to her.

“ Up-

"Upwards of two tedious hours "elapſed; during which I lingered in "the avenues adjoining my ſiſter's "apartment: her footſteps at length "caught my ear: I gained admittance, "and inſtantly made known the dread- "ful ſecret. She without heſitation "admitted me to the Marqueſa's pre- "ſence, who having learnt the direful "words, ſhuddered, and turned ſick at "heart; not on account of her own, "but for the Duca's ſafety; as ſhe con- "ceived, that, ſhould he be diſcovered "to be the lineal heir of the Montalvan "race, the avaricious ſoul of the Mar- "ques would adopt any conduct, how- "ever criminal, to obtain the immenſe "eſtates which would devolve to him "on the death of her brother. As to his "plans againſt her, ſhe could by no means "divine the cauſe; yet felt aſſured that "they would be put into immediate exe-

"cution,

"cution, from the perfect knowledge she "had acquired of the violence of his paf- "sions, and the determined mode of "conduct he was wont to adopt.

"Under those circumstances my ar- "guments prevailed; and I, in confe- "quence, planned the immediate flight "of the Marquesa and my sister from "the Castilio.

"Having directed the course they "should pursue in order to join me at "the small gate that opened on the side "of the forest, whither I would procure "horses to be conducted, and also ap- "point the Duca to join us, I then "bade adieu to the loved, trembling "Angela and my sister.

"Hastening to my apartment, I pen- "ned a letter to the Duca, that, if fruf- "trated in my desire of conversing with "him, I might then secretly convey the "intelligence to him. Placing the bil-

"let

" let in my bosom, I traversed the Castle " throughout—but in vain; the Duca " was nowhere to be found, though I " had twice visited his chamber and " tapped for admittance thither; for the " third time I repaired unobserved, and " with the utmost precaution. Having, " as before, gently called upon him by " the name of Huberto, I listened, and " presently heard the sound of footsteps " advancing towards the portal: in " a few seconds a low voice from with- " in demanded who I was and my " business.

" I once more called on Don Huberto; " and the door being partly open, he " replied, ' 'Tis I; what wouldest thou " with me?' I would have entered the " chamber, but he resisted my attempt; " and at the same time exclaimed in " smothered accents, ' For the present " begone!—You must not enter—There " are weighty reasons.'

" Anxious

" Anxious to communicate the in-
" telligence, I now praiſed myſelf for
" having penned the letter. I thruſt it
" into the Duca's hand; which was
" alone viſible; the reſt of his perſon
" remaining concealed behind the partly
" opened portal.

" In the billet I had carefully avoided
" any mention of the Duca's name, and
" had not affixed a ſignature, as the
" characters of my hand were perfectly
" known to him, on account of the fre-
" quent letters which had ſecretly paſſed
" from myſelf to him, ſince his reſidence
" in the Caſtilio, relative to the private
" conferences which took place with
" Angela.

" No ſooner had I delivered the billet,
" but the door was cloſed to, and I,
" happy in having effected my purpoſe,
" hurried from the corridor in order to
" prepare

"prepare the horſes, and fulfil my pur-
"poſe with the Marqueſa. I had already
"gained one of the ſmall avenues lead-
"ing to the weſtern wing of the building
"when the approaching echo of quick
"ſteps ſounded in my ear, and at the
"ſame inſtant the toll of the clock pro-
"claimed the eleventh hour of night.
"That part of the paſſage where I ſtood
"was involved in complete darkneſs;
"I availed myſelf of this circumſtance,
"and kept cloſe concealed till the
"ſtranger had paſſed me. Still keep-
"ing my eyes fixed upon the avenue, I
"waited till the intruder ſhould gain a
"ſmall caſement at its extremity, which
"emitted a faint gleam of light. The
"figure gained the ſpot; and though
"wholly incapable of recognizing his
"perſon, yet a momentary idea flaſhed
"acroſs my mind that it was the perſon
"of the Duca di Montalvan. The
"thought

“ thought filled me with horror, and
“ more particularly as I remembered
“ that it was through this very paſſage
“ that he was ſometimes accuſtomed to
“ paſs on his way from the private gar-
“ den of the Caſtilio. I inſtantly darted
“ forward to convince myſelf of the truth
“ or fallacy of the ſuggeſtion; but con-
“ ceive my agony when I found that
“ the portal which terminated the paſ-
“ ſage, and through which he had paſſed,
“ was bolted on the inner ſide.

“ Reflection was now become vain—it
“ was abſolutely neceſſary for me to join
“ the Marqueſa without further delay:
“ for in attempting to reach the Duca's
“ chamber on the oppoſite ſide of the
“ building by any other route, would
“ have ſo far procraſtinated the time,
“ that the Marqueſa's and my ſiſter's
“ eſcape would have been totally fruſ-
“ trated. Without, therefore, yielding

" to the multifarious ſuggeſtions which " would fain have obtruded themſelves " upon my mind, I haſtened to the " ſtables of the Caſtle, and having pre- " pared the horſes, wound round the " moat, and paſſing the ſkirts of the " wood, ſoon gained the appointed ſpot; " where, dead with fear, I found my " ſiſter ſupporting the beauteous Angela, " who, almoſt heart-broken, bewailed " her infant offspring, whom ſhe had " vainly endeavoured to make the part- " ner of her flight, the Marques having " expreſsly commanded that the babe " ſhould that night repoſe within his " chamber.

" I endeavoured to ſooth the anguiſh " of the Marqueſa; but ſhe became at " length ſo much a prey to grief that " it was with the utmoſt difficulty " my ſiſter and myſelf prevailed with " her to abandon the idea of a return

" to

SERFOGI'S

" to the Caſtilio. By perſuaſions, and " the fond hope of ſoon being joined " by the Duca her brother, ſhe was " finally content to follow the route " I had planned out; and I, in con- " ſequence, ſeated the lovely ſufferer " and my ſiſter upon their horſes, that " we might be in readineſs to ſpeed " forward at a moment's notice.

" Thus did the minutes drag on, yet " ſtill the wiſhed-for Duca did not arrive. " I began to retrace in my mind the " manner in which the billet had been " received, and owing to the wretched " ſtate of my mind, every incident " tended to fill me with appalling ideas. " The conduct of the Duca then began " to appear ſuſpicious——He had not " preſented himſelf before me—his " voice appeared feigned.—Suggeſtions " then aroſe in my mind—' Perhaps,' " thought I, ' the Marques di Badajos

" has

" has diſcovered his rank, and now ſeeks " revenge for the known antipathy " which the Duca entertains towards " him; and the ſtrenuous meaſures " which he adopted in reſpect to the " alliance between Angela and his mur- " dered friend——Should the ſtranger " who paſſed me have really been the " Duca, then the billet has fallen into " the hands of ſome one of the Marques's " creatures, purpoſely ſecreted in the " Duca's apartment to await his coming " to reſt; and thus our plans will be " fruſtrated by the Marques's immedi- " ately diſpatching perſons to the place " of rendezvous.'

" Theſe ſuggeſtions which aroſe in my " mind with inconceivable rapidity, " filled my breaſt with a trepidation of " fear, which I with difficulty was able " to conceal from the Marqueſa.

"After a few moments' deliberation, "I fully determined on ſecuring the "Marqueſa's and my ſiſter's ſafety at "any rate; and for that purpoſe adopted "the following plan:

"Being thoroughly acquainted with "the intricate paths of the wood, I led "the trembling Angela and my ſiſter to "the ſmall chapel where the Marqueſa "was wont to repair and breathe her "pious evening hymn of adoration. "Hard by this ſpot was a cavity in the "projecting rock that ſkirted the path; "and in this place did I conceal them, "whilſt I haſtened back to the private "gate, and ſecreting myſelf awaited the "arrival of the Duca.

"Here I had not remained many ſe- "conds when the gate was cautiouſly "opened; and, dreadful to relate! my "eyes fixed on the well-known perſon "of the Marques di Badajos, accom-

"panied

"panied by the two ſtrangers who had
"of late gained acceſs to the Caſtle.
"They ſeemed in cloſe converſation;
"but ſpoke in ſo low a tone, I could
"only gain a few incoherent ſentences.
"Having faſtened the gate, they ſtole
"forth, and with inquiring look ad
"a quick ſtep, inſtantly proceeded
"into the foreſt.—Happily for us they
"took a contrary direction to that where
"I had ſecreted the Marqueſa; and no
"longer doubting but that our plan was
"diſcovered, or that the elopement of
"the Marqueſa had gained her huſband's
"ear, I conceived it was abſolutely eſ-
"ſential for us to ſpeed forward on our
"route; not doubting that, in caſe of
"an eſcape the Duca di Montalvan
"would immediately repair to his own
"Caſtle, on finding that we had been
"compelled to proceed onward without
"him.

"I immediately haſtened to the cave
"near the private chapel, and acquainted

" the Marquesa and my sister with what
" I had witnessed. I assured her that
" her brother would escape from the
" hands of the Marques, and that he
" would join us before we had proceeded
" many leagues. By these and similar
" arguments I at length prevailed on
" her to leave the spot in which we
" were secreted; we instantly departed,
" taking a circuitous route, through the
" wood, and directed our way to that
" part of Spain where the Montalvan
" estates were situate. But the situation
" of the Marquesa prevented our mak-
" ing any great progress; and we were
" obliged to proceed slowly, fearing lest
" too great exertion might affect the
" lovely Angela.

" Until dawn we continued our jour-
" ney; and after halting during the
" heat of the day to recruit the ex-
" hausted strength and spirits of the
" Marquesa and my sister, we in the
" evening again pursued our way.

" Thus

" Thus did the whole of that night " elapſe without the ſmalleſt impedi- " ment having occurred; and till the " ſucceeding evening we, as before, " repoſed ourſelves from the fatigues we " had endured.

" By the expedition we had uſed we " were now removed far from the Caſ- " tilio di Badajos. The third evening " was advanced when the horſes being " got in readineſs, we, as before, ſet for- " ward on our route. We had already " proceeded ſome miles, and the duſky " vapours of evening nearly obſcured " the laſt tinge of light, as the road " wound into a thick and gloomy wood. " The Marqueſa complained of fatigue, " and we were compelled to ſlacken our " pace. This, however, did not afford " the deſired relief: ſhe moaned bitterly " —my ſiſter ſtrove to comfort her; " but ſhe faintly replied, that her men- " tal and bodily anguiſh would ſoon

" over-

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" overpower her ; and to augment our " forlorn ſituation the night-blaſt, which " had been gradually acquiring more " force, now bellowed through the trees; " and the rain-fraught clouds began to " diſtil their watery burden.

" It was now abſolutely neceſſary that " we ſhould ſtrive to gain ſome place of " ſhelter ; and for that purpoſe we urged " the Marqueſa as much as poſſible, " and we proceeded along the path at " a quick pace.

" Thus did we continue for a length " of time, while the fainting Angela " experienced unutterable agonies.

" At length a glimmering light caught " my regard. This ſight afforded a " momentary gleam of hope to the Mar- " queſa's mind; and we haſtened to- " wards it with redoubled ſpeed.

" On our arrival we found a large " cottage ; at the gate of which I " knocked luſtily. I was preſently an- " ſwered

" ſwered by an elderly woman from the
" caſement above, who, having heard
" my ſtory, took pity on our ſituation,
" and immediately unbarred her friendly
" door to admit us.

" Beneath this humble roof, Senor
" Condè, we repoſed—and beneath this
" roof did the ſuffering Angela bring
" forth a male infant."——

" 'Tis the ſame," exclaimed the
Condè; " 'tis the very cottage where I
" overtook and reſcued Conſtanza from
" the villain Sebaſtiano! Merciful
" heaven! that the ſame ſpot ſhould
" have witneſſed Ceſario's birth, and
" the ſiſter's releaſe from a barbarian's
" power!—Great and immutable are
" thy ways, O Providence!"—

The Condè, after yielding awhile to
the aſtoniſhment that over-powered every

faculty of his ſoul, continued the recital as follows:

"During three weeks did we conti-"nue the inmates of this kind creature's "dwelling; when the Marqueſa, being "ſufficiently recovered to purſue her "journey, liberally repaid her charitable "hoſteſs; and we once more took the "route toward the Montalvan Caſtle "and eſtates.

"Four days did we proceed forward "by eaſy ſtages, conceiving that the "Marques di Badajos had vainly at-"tempted to trace our route. On the "fifth we had to paſs an extenſive wood "that ſpread itſelf along a valley near "the borders of Old Caſtile.

"The ſun was on the decline as we "had three parts traverſed this foreſt;

"when

"when ſuddenly two fierce banditti, "emerging from a thicket, made to- "wards us: I inſtantly unſheathed my "rapier, and placing myſelf before the "Marqueſa and my ſiſter, determined "to defend them with my life. The "attack was vigorous; and I for a "time baffled their endeavours; till "receiving a deep gaſh in the ſword- "arm, I was compelled to relinquiſh "my weapon, and yield to their ſupe- "rior force.

"One of the ruffians would have ſlain "me, but his fellow deterred him, "alleging that my determined reſiſt- "ance merited applauſe, rather than "ſuch puſillanimous revenge. My "hands being bound, the Marqueſa, "my ſiſter, and myſelf were forthwith "ordered to follow their ſteps. The "lovely Angela for a time refuſed, when "the ſame ruffian who threatened my

"life, exasperated at her boldness, would "have sacrificed her to his wrath but "for the interference of the second, "who, from an authoritative manner he "adopted, appeared to be the Chief-"tain.

"Finding threats and persuasions "alike fruitless, the most lenient of those "ruffians suddenly tearing the Mar-"quesa's infant from my sister's arms, "swore to transport it from us, if we "did not comply with his commands.

"Thus was the Marquesa's deter-"mination conquered: the safety of her "innocent babe was now her only care, "and she without hesitation prepared "to follow the robbers' course, when the "sudden clatter of approaching horse-"men aroused the banditti to a just "sense of their danger. In vain they "endeavoured to escape with their cap-

"tives in their ſuit; for the ſuppoſed "ſtrangers quickly overtook us.—— "*Suppoſed ſtrangers* they were indeed; "for in the perſons of our deliverers "we beheld the enraged Marques di "Badajos, accompanied by ſeveral bra- "vos his followers, who, ruſhing on the "robbers, would have ſpeedily exter- "minated them, but for the arrival of "two others of the gang, who came to "their timely aſſiſtance; and thus for a "few minutes kept them in check. "They fought ſtoutly, but were com- "pelled to give way, and in the end "two of the banditti were ſlain; upon "which thoſe who had firſt attacked "us inſtantly took to flight; the one "bearing in his arms the infant babe of "the lovely Angela; who, on firſt be- "holding her Lord had fainted, and ſtill "continued ſenſeleſs in the arms of my "ſiſter.

" The Marques's followers purſued
" awhile the flying robbers; but all at-
" tempts to overtake them were vain,
" for they ſoon diſappeared in the in-
" tricate mazes of the wood, with which
" they were perfectly acquainted.

" Being thus fruſtrated in the attempt,
" they at length rejoined their cruel em-
" ployer, who had, during this interval,
" yielded himſelf to the gloomy ideas
" that were congenial to his ſoul. Deaf
" to the voice of pity that ſhould have
" ſoftened his adamantine heart on be-
" holding the emaciated, pale, and ſtill
" ſenſeleſs form of Angela, he ſullenly
" ordered her to be placed upon one of
" the horſes, while my ſiſter, mounted
" on another, with the utmoſt difficulty
" ſupported her from falling to the earth.
" But it was againſt me that the Marques
" particularly directed his malice; for I
" had planned the Marqueſa's eſcape,

" and

" and had voluntarily become the com-
" panion of her wayward fate. Ex-
" hausted as I then was with loss of
" blood, together with the mental an-
" guish, and bodily pain I endured, still
" was he lost to every touch of soft
" compassion. In vain I entreated to
" be conveyed on one of his attendant's
" horses; this was denied me; and the
" refusal accompanied with a look of
" malicious satisfaction that added to
" the sickness of my soul.

" Placed amid the horsemen, I for
" some miles followed their course. Oft-
" times did my loved sister gaze behind,
" while I endeavoured to mask the
" agonies I endured, and thereby lighten
" the load of grief that preyed upon her
" heart on the adored Angela's account.
" But these endeavours gradually failed,
" and I at length yielded to the faint
" sickness that stole o'er my frame, and

" sunk

...AJA BEREGOI...

"ſunk almoſt lifeleſs to the ground.
"From that inſtant I became wholly un-
"conſcious of everything that occurred;
"till ſome hours having elapſed, my
"eyes uncloſed, when I found myſelf in
"a ſmall cell, ſtretched upon a pallet;
"beſide which knelt my weeping ſiſter;
"whoſe agonizing affliction a holy father
"ſeemed anxiouſly endeavouring to
"ameliorate.

"Though perfectly conſcious of every
"thing that was tranſacted around me,
"I neverthelеſs remained ſeveral hours
"incapable of utterance. Every aliment
"that could tend to invigorate my frame
"was given me, and the wound in my
"arm was carefully dreſſed by a father
"of the convent, in which I apparently
"was.

"At the expiration of two days I was
"ſo far recovered as to converſe with
"my gentle ſiſter: my firſt inquiries
"were

"were relative to the adored Angela "and our ſituation; when ſhe acquainted "me, that ſiſterly affection had predo- "minated over every other feeling; for "on beholding my reduced ſtate, after "vainly attempting to move the Mar- "queſs's pity, ſhe reſolutely determined "on quitting her beloved lady, in order "to ſuccour an expiring brother; and "had, in conſequence of this reſolution, "left the ſtill fainting Angela; who, "conducted by the Marques and his "attendants, quitted us on the borders "of the foreſt.

"My ſiſter then informed me, that "after a fruitleſs endeavour to revive "me, ſhe quitted her proſtrate ſituation "to diſcover, if poſſible, ſome aſylum "where ſuccour might be procured; "when chance conducted her trembling "ſteps towards the vale, where roſe the "ſpires of a ſmall but peaceful ſanctuary

"dedi-

" dedicated to religion: thither ſhe was " haſtening when a brother of the con- " vent, who had ſtrayed without its " walls, met, and having heard my ſiſter's " tale, with her proceeded to the ſpot " where I lay. By this kindly friar was " I ſupported to the charitable manſion; " where all that mingled religion and " tenderneſs could ſuggeſt was practiſed " to reſtore my fading life.

" The united efforts of my gentle ſiſ- " ter and the holy brothers proved at " length ſucceſsful; for ere two months " had elapſed, my health was reſtored, " and I began to feel a renovation of " that ſtrength of which I had been ſo " completely bereft.

" I ſhall not endeavour to paint thoſe " emotions of gratitude which we mutu- " ally felt towards the holy fraternity, " but proceed to the ſequel of my ſad " recital.

" On

"On quitting the Caſtilio di Badajos, "I had not neglected to ſupply myſelf "with a ſum requiſite to the undertak- "ing; the Marqueſa had likewiſe en- "truſted to my ſiſter's care a thouſand "ducats and a ſmall caſket of jewels of "immenſe value, ſo that I was well ena- "bled to purſue any ſteps which I "deemed requiſite.

"Having conſulted with my ſiſter, "we ſoon planned our future mode of "conduct. In conſequence of which, "after receiving the benediction of the "reverend Superior, and preſenting a "rich jewel to the ſhrine of the convent "in token of the kindneſs which we "experienced, we took our departure, "and proceeded by the neareſt route "to the Caſtilio di Badajos; which "was four days' journey from the "monaſtery.

"On

" On our arrival at the village, hard
" by the moated dwelling, my ſiſter
" made eager inquiries concerning the
" Marqueſa: as for myſelf, the emotions
" of my ſoul were too poignant—love,
" fear, and anxiety by turns agitated
" my breaſt. I ſtrove, but could
" not conquer the powerful impulſe;
" and remained ſilent during her nu-
" merous interrogatories.

" But oh, Condè! how can words
" expreſs my agonies on learning the
" fatal truth!—Yes! from that moment
" the ſcene of life cloſed upon me; for
" the adored, the loved object on whom
" my ſoul doated, the lovely Angela was
" no more!

" On ſtrict inquiry, we found that her
" death muſt have taken place immedi-
" ately after her return to the Caſtilio
" with the Marques.

" In

"In vain we made inquiries relative "to her brother the ſuppoſed Huberto; "we gained not the ſmalleſt intelligence "concerning his fate: and as to learn-"ing anything ſatisfactory from the in-"mates of the Caſtilio, we were well "aſſured of the futility of ſuch an at-"tempt; as the Marques no longer "made it his reſidence, but had with-"drawn to the Court; leaving only a "choſen few of his creatures in the "gloomy manſion.

"I would have given worlds to viſit "the tomb of the deceaſed Angela— "my ſiſter too anxiouſly wiſhed to in-"dulge the liquid flow of ſorrow o'er "her grave; but this ſatisfaction was "denied us, as report affirmed that ſhe "was interred in the vault of the chapel "within the Caſtilio; whither we could "not repair without the ſanction of the "ruffian Mendo, who had been appointed

"ſteward

"ſteward to the Marques, and who "would doubtleſs have planned ſome "direful ſcheme againſt us, could he "have diſcovered myſelf and ſiſter.

"Dejected melancholy preyed on my "ſiſter's ſoul, and I experienced the "bitter pangs of eternal miſery—of "hopeleſs love!—Wearied with the ſpot "which reminded us of every object "tending to augment our ſorrow, on the "arrival of the third morning we took our "departure; and retracing our ſteps, after "five tedious days' journey, we arrived "at the Montalvan domain.

"Here remembrance painted former "days of bliſs:—here every recollec-"tion was awakened, as our ſtreaming "eyes were bent upon the turf that "wrapped a mother's holy duſt.

"Theſe ſacred duties accompliſhed, "we repaired to the dwellings of thoſe

"villagers

"villagers whom we knew would revere "our parent's memory, and love her "offspring with unfeigned affection. "But here a fresh scene of misery presented itself: the lapse of this short "period of our absence had levelled "some with the dust, and others were "fled, we knew not whither—the village "no longer wore its wonted aspect, for "sadness seemed its sole inhabitant.

"At length we found the cottage of "a former friend—of one who oft had "pressed his rugged cheek to mine, and "lulled my sister's infant troubles in his "breast. The honest soul shed tears of "joy upon us—we mingled ours awhile "—and then inquired the fate of Montalvan's Noble Duca.

"With difficulty the peasant's words "found utterance——He spoke—fell "death was in his speech—for he proclaimed the Duca's decease.

"From

" From his recital we learnt that ſome
" ſix weeks had elapſed ſince the young
" Duca's corpſe was found mangled in
" the adjoining foreſt. It alſo appeared
" that the Marques di Badajos had
" attended at the ſumptuous funeral:
" ſince which, he had, by right of his
" departed wife, laid claim to the wide
" poſſeſſions of Montalvan; whoſe aged
" tenants he had diſpoſſeſſed, and whoſe
" domeſtics he had driven far from the
" Caſtilio; placing in their ſtead his
" own creatures.

" Thus, Senor Condé, periſhed the
" blood of one of Spain's moſt noble
" race. The ſiſter fell a prey to miſery
" and a broken heart, if not, perhaps, to
" ſavage cruelty; for Heaven only
" knows what conduct the Marques's
" gloomy mind adopted when the trem-
" bling victim was in his power. Thus
" alſo periſhed the young Duca, whoſe
" ripen-

"ripening years proclaimed him the "adopted Son of Virtue, Truth, and "Honor. He fell by the murderous "ſteel: but what arm ſtruck the blow, "or what was the inſtigation of the deed, "remains in the breaſt of God at ſome "future period to diſcloſe.

"During three long years I alleviated "my ſiſter's ſufferings; and ſhe with "love repaid my fond endeavours. "Still I cheriſhed the ſecret paſſion in "my boſom—ſtill was the flame of "pureſt love unquenched. But at this "period the ſorrows of MY ſoul were "forgotten; for I had to witneſs the "rapid decay of my ſiſter's conſtitution. "In vain was aid adminiſtered—in vain "were the precepts of religion, and the "fond attentions of a brother, unremit- "tingly offered; for at the expiration "of a few weeks I beheld my Margarita "wrapped in the ſhroud of cold oblivion.

"—I

"—I thought this ſhock would have "terminated my exiſtence; but Fate "had otherwiſe decreed. I paid the "laſt ſad tribute to my ſiſter's cold re- "mains; who ſleeps beſide the beſt, the "moſt beloved of mothers.

"By various means I ſtrove to calm "my mind; but every endeavour was "futile, till Religion preſented herſelf, "arrayed in the bright veſtments of "heavenly purity, reſignation, and love. "I obeyed its call—I ſought the con- "vent's peaceful walls—where you, Sir "Condè, have beheld me—under whoſe "friendly roof you now repoſe——It "is here that I have lulled my ſorrows "for a term of years—My cell and hea- "ven alone are witneſſes of the prayers "I breathe—The chapel's pealing echo "offers up the hymn in uniſon with the "tranquil brothers of my ſolitude— "and in the cloiſter's peaceful ſhade I "think

" think of former ſcenes, I think of
" love, of Angela, and bliſs beyond the
" grave.

"GASPAR ARZINI."

CHAP. III.

Immutable are fate's decrees, and juſt,
In vain weak mortals war againſt the will
Of high Omnipotence. For who but God
Is all immaculate?—Who but he
Can ſcan the deep deſigns of wicked men,
Or bring to light th' ſecret'ſt deed of blood,
Tho' cloak'd in ermin'd pomp and all the ſhow
Of riches, ſway, and earthly pride?

If guilty horrors wrack th' ennobl'd great,
How tarniſh'd are the robes of richeſt ſtate?
His mind is ſhrouded by hell's direſt gloom,
Who ſhun's dread juſtice by his own ſelf-doom.

Bleſt virtue, like a radiant ſun, diſpels
The murky clouds of fate.——Virtue defies
The ſhoals and quickſands of life's troubled ſea,
And ſoars ſuperior to all wordly ills.
Then calm the tide of future life flows on,
For all the reſt is love and harmony.

Lost in wonder, the Condè Rimualdo dwelt for a time on the recital of the unfortunate Arzini, which had fully proved

proved the guilt of the Marques di Badajos, and excited by turns every tender emotion of the ſoul. No longer did Ceſario's conduct appear myſterious; no longer was there a doubt as to the purity of the loved Conſtanza; every favourable ſuggeſtion which he had cheriſhed in his heart was now fully ſubſtantiated. With what ecſtacy did he picture to himſelf the bliſsful moment when the Marques del Lara would become acquainted with the incontrovertible facts relative to Conſtanza and his friend.

After fully yielding to the train of ideas which theſe circumſtances excited, the Condè began to conſider what meaſures would be moſt requiſite for him to adopt. The powerful effect which Ceſario's conduct, in regard to

the Marques his father, had already produced on his mind, deterred the Condè from all idea of making him acquainted with the facts which were now so fully proved by Arzini's relation. After revolving each circumstance, Rimualdo finally determined on privately acquainting the King with the manner in which he had become possessed of Arzini's relation, and then to present the manuscript for his perusal.

Ere the Condè retired to rest he visited the chamber of his friend Cesario, whom he still found in the same dejected state of mind, notwithstanding every effort which had been adopted to produce a change. With sincere affection, Rimualdo warmly pressed his hand, the action produced a momentary change in Cesario's features;

tures;

tures; he turned his gaze full upon the Condè; faintly returned his pressure; then sighing deeply, dropped his hand.

Rimualdo, after yielding to the flood of grief that burst involuntarily from his eyes, quitted the apartment, with the strictest injunction that no individual should intrude on the sorrows of his friend, and that every effort of the faculty might be exerted in order to restore the just temperament of Cesario's mind.

The following morning the Condè proceeded to the palace; where, after signifying his request to the Lords in waiting, he was immediately admitted to hold a private conference with his Monarch. Rimualdo having fully detailed the circumstance relative to the obtaining Arzini's story, and presenting the manuscript to his Sovereign, entreated that he would give it a perusal.

 The

The King, ſurpriſed, demanded the Condè's reaſons for ſo ſtrange a requeſt, when Rimualdo partly unfolded the contents which related to the Marques di Badajos, on which the Spaniſh Sovereign inſtantly opened the paper, and, motioning the Condè to be ſeated, began the recital. Rimualdo obſerved the various changes which were by turns viſibly depicted on the features of the King, who became ſo much intereſted in the detail, that his eyes ſcarcely wandered for a moment from the manuſcript. Having at length concluded Arżini's ſtory, he exclaimed aloud:

"Yes, yes! it is obvious the Mar-
"ques is guilty even to the extent of
"the crime alleged againſt him: his
"rank ſhall not ſcreen him from that
"juſtice which his abhorred guilt ſo
"juſtly merits."

The

The King then turning to the Condè, expatiated for a time on the myſterious ways of Providence, which thus brought forth the hidden deed of blood and horror; he then warmly commended Rimualdo's conduct in forwarding the cauſe of juſtice; expreſſed his pity for the neglected youth Ceſario and his perſecuted ſiſter; and then made known his pleaſure, the purport of which was, that a diſpatch ſhould be inſtantly forwarded to Don Arzini at the Convent, in which his immediate preſence at Toledo ſhould be notified. The Condè having undertaken to ſee his Monarch's will ſpeedily executed, departed from the palace, and having ordered meſſengers to be in readineſs, he, without delay, penned the packet with which the horſeman ſet off at full ſpeed.

The Spaniſh Sovereign no longer heſitating as to the guilt of the Marques,

ques, yielded himſelf to thoſe multifarious ideas which naturally preſented themſelves to his imagination. Sometimes he determined on publicly expoſing the guilt of this powerful nobleman; but in the end determined that his puniſhment ſhould be private, and that the truth once confirmed by Arzini, the ſentence and nature of his guilt ſhould remain ſolely veſted in the breaſts of thoſe nobles who had already been convened on this important occaſion.

After this determination the King conceived it neceſſary that the grandees ſhould be again aſſembled; and that each, after learning the facts ſtated in Arzini's detail, ſhould ſolemnly ſwear to conceal the matter within his own breaſt. In conſequence of this reſolution, meſſengers were diſpatched to the ſeveral nobles and churchmen, among whom the Condè Rimualdo's preſence was particularly

particularly notified as being requiſite on the occaſion; and at an early hour the ſame evening the aſſembly was convened.

The King, after ſlightly detailing Arzini's ſtory proceeded to the peruſal of thoſe parts of the manuſcript which ſo materially concerned the Marques di Badajos; they failed not to impreſs the ſame conviction on every one preſent as they had before done on the mind of the Spaniſh Monarch.

After ſome conſultation the ſeveral oaths of ſecrecy were ſworn, when it was thought moſt expedient that Arzini's relation ſhould be ſent to the Marques di Badajos for his peruſal, as it appeared moſt probable that the ſtrength of evidence againſt him would at once flaſh conviction on his enhorrored mind, and

draw forth a confeſſion of the whole ſcene of guilt.

The delivery of the manuſcript was entruſted to two of the noblemen preſent: after which the aſſembly broke up.

Rimualdo, on taking his departure, was peculiarly noticed by the King; he would fain have demanded leave of abſence from the Court, that he might have haſtened on the wings of love to the manſion of his parents, and unveil the myſtery that clouded his doom, but this ſtep was impracticable in the preſent ſtate of Ceſario's mind; and he was compelled for a while to curb the impetuoſity of youthful love, and yield to the more tranquil calls of friendſhip and eſteem.

The Marques di Badajos, abſorbed in gloomy horrors, paſſed each day in ſullen

ſullen pride and contemptuous ſilence; yet, beneath this haughty exterior, he wore a mind torn with the ſcorpion ſting of conſcious guilt. The broad eye of open day was hateful to him, and the thick gloom of night brought horrors in its train, that made him loath a life from which he dared not fly. Thus was each moment of exiſtence a torment to his ſoul: even religion afforded no comfort; for he had fled its ſacred pale, and ſhunned it with abhorrence.

The moment at length arrived when Arzini's recital was placed before him: he received it from the nobles with an arrogant air, nor even deigned to exchange with them a ſingle word.

The grandees having retired, the Marques haſtily ſeized the paper, and tearing it open, began the ſad relation.

He had at firſt imagined that it was ſome dread ſentence pronounced upon him; how greatly, therefore, was he aſtoniſhed at the ſuperſcription, particularly as all recollection of the name of Arzini had eſcaped his memory.

The Marques for a few moments yielded his mind to thought; ſtill was he ignorant of the fact which was ſo ſhortly to thrill his ſoul with horror. Loſt in amazement he paced the chamber awhile, then throwing himſelf on a ſeat began the peruſal of Arzini's ſtory.

As the dread truth began to develope itſelf, the Marques experienced an agony of thought that drove him to diſtraction; he ſtruck his forehead, gnaſhed his teeth, and bitter execrations burſt from his convulſed lips. But ſoon this violence of rage decreaſed, his heart ſickened, his pulſe grew languid, and the pale hue

of

of death diffuſed itſelf over his countenance, which was ſo ſhortly before fluſhed with the crimſon livery of madning paſſion. Powerleſs he oft-times dropped the manuſcript, and after yielding for a ſhort interval to the horrible ſenſations that ruſhed upon his brain, reſumed the ſtory; till he had at length moſt fully peruſed the damning recital. The Marques then caſting the paper to earth, folded his arms o'er his heaving breaſt, and riſing from the ſeat with eyes fixed to the earth, traverſed the chamber with irreſolute ſtep.

Sometimes the idea of boldly confronting Arzini flaſhed upon his mind; the thought however was but momentary, for ſuch was the exceſſive pride of the Marques, that he diſdained to have recourſe to deception in the preſent ſtate of the caſe, leſt his guilt being thoroughly ſubſtantiated, it ſhould ap-

pear

pear that he had puſillanimouſly ſought to ſcreen himſelf, by endeavouring to vilify an individual whom he deſpiſed.

While theſe tumultuous thoughts agitated the brain of the guilty Marques, the amiable Rimualdo, after diſpatching a meſſenger to the Caſtilio del Lara with a full detail of every event concerning the youth Ceſario and his adored Conſtanza, flew to the chamber of his friend, whom he beheld, with the utmoſt joy, releaſed from that dreadful ſtate which had for ſo long a period numbed every faculty of his ſoul; they mutually flew to each other's embrace, and the Condè felt with delight the warm flood of tears that copiouſly diſtilled from the eyes of the feeling Ceſario.

The Condè having in ſome meaſure compoſed the perturbation of his friend's

mind,

mind, Cesario proceeded to make the most anxious inquiries relative to the Marques di Badajos, and the proceedings which had since taken place. Rimualdo observing the agitation of the youth, carefully waved the question awhile, and then acquainted Cesario that it was apparent, from strong circumstances, that the Marques had been deceived, and yielding to the violence of passion that agitated him on the supposition of his wife's guilt, he had madly sacrificed her and the Duca her brother, (who was the supposed author of his shame,) conceiving it an act of just retribution.

The Condè then proceeded to acquaint his friend that it would most indubitably appear that he was the legal son of the Marques, and that Constanza, the suffering object of his affection, would,

would, in embracing the adopted friend of her adorer, take to her arms an unknown brother.

Rimualdo by thus placing the conduct of the Marques in a point of view lefs culpable than even Cefario himfelf had imagined, greatly tranquilized the mind of the youth, and gave rife to the hope that the Monarch, on account of his rank and the favor in which he had been ever held, would make fome allowance for the ecftacy of paffion that muft have fwayed his mind on fuch an occafion, as to urge him to the perpetration of fo foul a deed. Such was the conclufion that afforded a degree of tranquillity to Cefario's fufceptible breaft; as, in cafe of the Monarch's pardon, he fhould be releafed from the idea of having been inftrumental to the death of a father.

The

The Marques del Lara, on receipt of the Condè's letter, was loſt in amazement; he inſtantly communicated the ſurpriſing intelligence to the Marqueſa, and they continued cloſeted for a conſiderable time, mutually unburthening the numerous ideas which the ſtrange recital had given riſe to.

Sometimes the Marques would, for a moment, waver in his belief; but immediately the ſtrong conviction that the Condè would never demean himſelf ſo far as to adopt an artifice ſo flagrant, and which would in the end inevitably tend to diſgrace him for ever; the recollection too of the Sovereign's mandate in regard to Conſtanza recurred to the mind of the Marques, and thus diſpelled every unfavourable idea which could attach itſelf to the conduct of Rimualdo.

The

The fond Marquefa, ever convinced of the honor that governed each action of her fon, now felt doubly affured that his atteftations were true, and that he would never adopt a conduct that might tend to debafe his character and nobility of blood. It was now that fhe exulted in her offspring, and drew from the Marques a confeffion that, fhou'd the recital of Rimualdo prove juft, he would not only pardon the flight tranfgreffions into which he had been hurried through the excefs of youthful paffions, but alfo applaud his manly refolution, and perhaps crown the deareft wifhes of his heart. The Marques at length retired, having acceded to the propofition of the Marquefa, who requefted permiffion to repair to the folitary chamber of Conftanza, and there difpel with gentlenefs and foothing words the painful thoughts which her captivity

vity and forlorn ſituation muſt have given riſe to.

On the wings of joy the Marqueſa flew to the chamber of the beauteous captive, while her features diſplayed the ſmile of affability. Having for a few moments gazed upon Conſtanza, whoſe lovely eyes were bent to the ground, while the bluſh of timid modeſty over-ſpread her cheek, the Marqueſa approached, and taking a ſeat beſide her, ſtrove to fortify her ſpirits by the moſt gentle language and winning manners. Ever awake to the ſoothing voice of pity, Conſtanza ſoon gave vent to a flood of tears that greatly tranquilized the perturbation of her ſoul: ſhe then, dropping on her knee, ſeized the outſtretched hand of the Marqueſa, in which ſhe concealed her dewy cheek; and, after a momentary ſtruggle, exclaimed:

"Oh,

“ Oh, Madam! how my full heart “ ſwells to offer thanks adequate to your “ ſympathetic kindneſs!—Yet, why ſhould “ a forlorn and an apparent guilty wretch “ like me be deemed worthy ſuch a “ peculiar kindneſs?—Leave me, gene- “ rous mother of a virtuous ſon.—Yes, “ leave Conſtanza till you have found “ her worthy your peculiar favor.”—

Here her voice failed; when the Marqueſa, touched to the ſoul, raiſed her from the earth; and receiving Conſtanza almoſt fainting on her boſom, exclaimed:

“ I have found thee deſerving—Yes, “ I know thee chaſte; nor was my Ri- “ mualdo deceived—Thou art virtuous, “ thou art lovely, and of noble blood!”

Having in ſome meaſure tranquilized the acute feelings of Conſtanza, the Marqueſa proceeded to unravel, in part, the

the myſtery attending her fate. The recital was productive of the moſt poignant ſenſations that could agitate the human breaſt: alternately ſhe ſhuddered at a father's guilt, and the murder of a wronged parent and her innocent brother—Sometimes ſhe experienced the keen thrill of joy at the idea of embracing that near relative, in whom ſhe was to behold the adopted friend of him her ſoul adored: but ſoon the tear of compaſſion for the woes which Angela and her brother had endured, and the dread of that puniſhment which would await a guilty father, ſtruck deep into Conſtanza's mind.

In the midſt of theſe contending emotions the Marques del Lara entered the apartment. As he gazed on the lovely dejected form before him, he felt compunction for the conduct he had adopted towards her; he alſo recurred to

to the conſcious air of virtue that had characterized her features, and produced ſuch ſtrange ſenſations in his breaſt. The idea of injuſtice to a forlorn creature totally diſarmed the Marques of all reſolution: his unſullied mind felt the rigor of his paſt conduct, which, added to the preſent wretched ſtate of Conſtanza's mind, produced the moſt lively emotions in his ſoul: each word he uttered was fraught with kindneſs; he preſſed her hand, and even ſeemed to out-vie the overjoyed Marqueſa in expreſſions of pitying tenderneſs.

Conſtanza felt the motive that gave riſe to this extraordinary change: ſhe bleſſed the Marques; allowed the juſtneſs of his conduct; confeſſed that every circumſtance combined, tended to render her apparently guilty in his eyes: and, in the fulneſs of her heart, tears again

again burſt forth; and ſhe bathed the hand of the ſoftened Marques.

While theſe ſcenes were tranſacting at the Caſtilio del Lara, another aſſembly of the grandees was convened before the King early on the enſuing morning after the delivery of Arzini's narrative to the Marques di Badajos; at which meeting the Condè, as before, attended.

After the various opinions of the ſeveral grandees had been taken, relative to the death which the Marques di Badajos ſhould be doomed to ſuffer, on the alleged crimes being ſubſtantiated againſt him, Rimualdo addreſſed the Monarch; and in a moſt pathetic ſpeech delineated the ſtate of Ceſario's mind, and the dreadful conſequences that were likely to accrue, ſhould he be made acquainted with his parent's doom, in conſequence of the part he had originally taken in his

his arreſtation, and the flagrant proofs of guilt he had adduced againſt him.

The Condè's harangue produced the moſt lively emotions in the breaſts of all preſent; and the Spaniſh Sovereign was pleaſed to order, that whatſoever fate the Marques ſuffered, the circumſtance ſhould be eternally buried from the world and his virtuous offspring; and ſome plauſible ſtory framed which ſhould lead them to imagine that after the forfeiture of his eſtates and title, he was doomed to ſecret and perpetual confinement.

This lenient determination being adopted, the King then ordered two of the nobles to repair to the Marques, in order to learn the effect which Arzini's relation had produced on his mind. The choſen grandees inſtantly retired to fulfil their Sovereign's command, while the

the aſſembly continued ſitting, awaiting their return.

In the meantime the two nobles proceeded to the apartments allotted to the Marques di Badajos; but, on entering, who can paint their horror on beholding the body of the Marques ſtretched lifeleſs on the floor? which was crimſoned with a ſtream of clotted blood that flowed from a double gaſh in his ſide; where ſtill the reeking blade of a ſtiletto was buried. They approached the corpſe, but the icy hand of death had long chilled the genial warmth of life; and in the ghaſtly viſage of the Marques was ſtill diſplayed all that agony of ſoul which the fell horrors of his mind had inflicted on him. On the table was found a folded paper directed to the Spaniſh Monarch, with which the grandees inſtantly repaired to the aſſembly; where, having made known the dreadful ſcene they had witneſſed, the King

 opened

opened their regular ſcroll, and read as follows:

“ Dread Sire,

“ Fell terrors rack my ſoul——my
“ fate is fixed——my own hand ſhall
“ prevent the horrors of a public execu-
“ tion.——I have read Arzini's ſtory;
“ it has ſtruck conviction on my brain
“ —My wife was true—I was the mur-
“ derer of herſelf and brother—yes,
“ for this hand pierced the boſom of
“ Angela—this tongue doomed Huberto
“ to his fate. But murder was not a
“ ſtranger to me; for by my orders
“ the death of him who was the be-
“ trothed of Angela was compaſſed. I
“ cannot gaze on the offspring I have
“ ſo wronged—upon the lawful children
“ of my blood.—I will not hear Ceſario's
“ curſes—I will not gaze upon Con-
“ ſtanza's features; they remind me of
“ the murdered Angela.——To my So-
vereign's

"vereign's care I bequeath them. Yet "this is not the ſum of all my purpoſed "guilt.

"Angela's death, and that of the "ſuppoſed author of my ſhame effected, "the thirſt of power ſwayed my inmoſt "ſoul; and my deſires were augmented "by the recollection of the young Duca "di Montalvan's hatred towards me. "I formed my plan—His myſterious "abſence from Montalvan Caſtle for-"warded my deſign; and I repaired "thither: by me ſome truſty bravos "were tutored; they ſwore ſecreſy; and "alſo ſwore to trace the Duca's route "and effect his death. They departed "from the Caſtilio, and I felt ſatisfied "that my purpoſe would ſoon be fully "completed. Still eager to poſſeſs the "vaſt domains of Montalvan, an event "ſoon occurred tending to complete

" my wiſh: a murdered Cavaliero was
" found in the adjoining foreſt. By my
" orders the corpſe was conveyed to the
" Caſtilio; freſh gaſhes were inflicted to
" diſguiſe the face; and ſome habili-
" ments of the young Duca being ex-
" changed for thoſe worn by the Cava-
" liero, the deception was complete,
" and the body ſolemnly interred in the
" vault of the Caſtilio. Thus I became
" the legal claimant of the Montalvan
" eſtates. I firmly relied on the bravos
" effecting the Duca's murder: but
" even in caſe of his eſcape, I knew
" that no guilt could attach to my con-
" duct, and that all I ſhould ſuffer would
" be the forfeiture of the lands, of which
" I had thus traitorouſly poſſeſſed my-
" ſelf. The bravos ſought; but all
" was ineffectual, the young Duca was
" not to be found. Ah! little did I
" ſuppoſe that I had myſelf made all

" ſecure!—The years rolled on, no
" Duca appeared; every one believed
" the body which was found to have
" been Montalvan's: and thus I con-
" tinued great in title, rich in poſſeſſions,
" but curſed in mind.

" The choſen inſtruments of my
" purpoſes were Sebaſtiano and Mendo.
" The Condè Rimualdo inflicted death
" on the firſt; Mendo ſtill exiſts—may
" juſtice doom him!

" Within the long-neglected chapel
" in the foreſt moulder the remains of
" Angela and her brother—May their
" ſpirits repoſe in peace! for now their
" murderer expiates his crime——I die
" ——It is my own hand that ſtrikes
" the blow——Thus everlaſting tor-
" tures wait my ſoul hereafter.

" BADAJOS."

Horror and amazement filled the boſom of each grandee during the pe-

rusal of the confession of the Marques: each shuddered at the complicated guilt which had stained the breast of one so high in title and so proud of blood. While every noble present yielded his mind to the ideas which naturally suggested themselves on such an awful occasion, the Condè was suddenly summoned from the apartment on emergent business. Having obtained the King's permission he retired; when, in one of the adjoining chambers, Rimualdo was saluted by Don Arzini, otherwise father Augustino, who, in consequence of the summons, had travelled from the monastery to Toledo with the utmost expedition.

The Condè after the warmest expressions of friendship and gratitude, proceeded to explain in part the cause of the extraordinary summons he had so unexpectedly received; when, leaving Arzini

Arzini loſt in amazement, the Condè immediately returned to the aſſembly and notified the monk's arrival.

Although the fact was now clearly aſcertained, yet it was deemed requiſite to examine Arzini, who was accordingly ſummoned. The monk having more circumſtantially detailed everything that related to the Marques, alſo adduced ſeveral other incidents that tended even more to confirm the Marques's confeſſion and aſcertain his own recital beyond all poſſibility of doubt.

Having been ſworn to ſecrecy reſpecting every incident of this myſterious and dark ſcene of guilt, the aſſembly broke up; when the King, after recommending it to the Condè to break the death of the Marques to Ceſario with the greateſt caution, ſuffered him to retire; and Rimualdo, accompanied by Arzini, repaired forthwith to his hotel.

 The

The Condè, after remaining cloſeted with the monk for a conſiderable length of time, during which he gave a full narration of the ſtrange developement of the hiſtory, then forwarded letters immediately to the Caſtilio del Lara, giving an account of the ſequel of this eventful tale, by which the nobleneſs of Ceſario's and Conſtanza's birth was inconteſtibly proved. He concluded the letter with the moſt fervent atteſtations of his unalterable love for Conſtanza; and laſtly entreated, that, was ſhe ſtill within the walls of the Caſtilio, the Marqueſa might be permitted to break to her the ſtory of the Marques di Badajos's untimely death.

Having taken thoſe ſteps, Rimualdo, accompanied by Arzini, repaired to Ceſario's chamber, whoſe tranquillity of mind ſeemed to be greatly reſtored by the late converſations he had held with

with the Condè. Rimualdo having introduced Arzini by the title of Father Augustino, began to break the dreadful truth to him respecting the Marques his father. Having first informed his friend that the innocence of his mother was fully proved; that himself and Constanza were, by the Marques's own confession, the legitimate offspring of his union with Angela; he lastly proceeded to acquaint the youth, that, stung with remorse and horror, at the commission of the dreadful act into which his excessive jealousy had hurried him, in a paroxism of frenzy he had rashly terminated his existence.

The effect of this intelligence on the mind of Cesario was powerful in the extreme; and had not the peaceful doctrines of Arzini been offered, the consequences would have proved fatal to the youth. But three days having elapsed, the united endeavours of friendship, and the strain of religion and peace breathed

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breathed from the lips of one whoſe former love for Angela was now revived on beholding her offspring, produced the happieſt effect; and Ceſario ſunk into that ſtate of peaceful melancholy which had ever characteriſed his conduct ſince the death of his adored Maria.

Each faculty having at length regained its juſt equilibrium, Ceſario began to conſider the variety of events that had tranſpired within ſo ſhort a period, when the enchanting idea of claſping a ſiſter to his boſom aroſe in his mind, and filled his ſoul with emotions of rapturous delight: he imparted the pleaſure he experienced to his friend; and, preſſing his hand, at the ſame time promiſed the full completion of Rimualdo's happineſs, ſhould the Marques del Lara not prove averſe to the union.

Five days after the death of the Marques di Badajos he was privately interred within the Chapel of the Caſtle of Toledo;

Toledo; when the pious Cefario, accompanied by the Condè and Arzini, attended this laft fad ceremony. Private maffes were ordered, and relics prefented to the church to procure the repofe of the fouls of the murdered, as well as for the peace of the wretched Marques di Badajos.

The day after the interment Cefario anxioufly expreffed a wifh of joining his fifter and retiring from the buftle of Toledo's populous city; in confequence of which, the Condè made a perfonal application to the King, requefting leave of abfence for a term, at the fame time affigning the motives that inftigated him to make the requeft. The Spanifh Monarch freely acquiefced with the demand, and at the fame time prefented a parchment fcroll, bearing his gracious name and fignet, whereby Cefario was made Duca di Montalvan, and likewife invefted with all the eftates of his father the

the Marques di Badajos. On preſenting this parchment, the King expreſſed a deſire that Rimualdo would, on his return to Court, conduct his friend, that he might be made a participator in his gracious favours.

The Condè was taking his departure, when ſuddenly the thought of Conſtanza flaſhed upon his mind: he inſtantly turned to his Sovereign, and on his knee made a confeſſion of the love he had imbibed for that perſecuted innocent. The King liſtened with the greateſt affability; then raiſing the Condè, and preſſing his hand, promiſed that he would interfere with the Marques his father in his behalf; after which, Rimualdo, overjoyed at his ſucceſs, returned to his hotel, where, having made Ceſario acquainted with the bounty of his Monarch, he preſented him with the

deed

deed whereby he became one of the moſt powerful Noblemen of the Spaniſh realm.

On the enſuing morning everything was prepared; and at an early hour the Condè Rimualdo, accompanied by Ceſario now the new inveſted Duca di Montalvan, and Don Arzini, began their journey to the Caſtilio del Lara, in the fruitful kingdom of Navarre.

During this period, Mendo, the confederate and hired villain of the Duca was arreſted at the Caſtle di Badajos, whence being conveyed to Toledo, he was privately tried, and being by his own confeſſion condemned as an acceſſary in every ſcene of guilt, he ſuffered private execution, thus expiating in ſome meaſure the deeds of blood with which he had been ſo familiar.

During

During the Condè's journey nothing material occurred, and they arrived ſafe on the morning of the fourth day at the gates of the Caſtle of Lara, where all was in readineſs to receive him, as the Marques had for ſome days expected his arrival. On once more beholding him he preſſed the Condè to his heart, and the Marqueſa bathed the cheeks of her loved Rimualdo with tears of the moſt unfeigned affection. Ceſario was alſo welcomed and complimented by the Marques, nor was Arzini leſs a participator in his congratulations.—The Marques, with that openneſs which ever characteriſes the ſoul of true Spaniſh nobility, would have entered into an explanation of the reaſons which had actuated his conduct in reſpect to the ſuppoſed abandoned Conſtanza, but on this head the Duca would hear nothing, applauding

plauding on the contrary the reſolute conduct of the Marques, who rather than behold his ſon ignominiouſly allied, would have periſhed to maintain his honor unſullied. During this converſation the Marqueſa had retired; but who can paint the feelings of the Condè, the Duca, and Arzini, on beholding her re-enter the chamber conducting the beauteous yet trembling Conſtanza? Love, all powerful love, ſwelled Rimualdo's ſoul; the ecſtacy of brotherly affection agitated the boſom of the Duca; and Arzini in Conſtanza beheld her adored mother's image, and yielding to the exceſs of feeling that overpowered his breaſt, would have willingly worſhipped the divine form before him.

After the firſt tranſports of affection had ſubſided, the Marques, retiring with the Condè, preſented him with a letter which

which he had received by expreſs from the Spaniſh Sovereign: it was couched in the moſt favorable terms for the Condè; and concluded with a deſire that no impediment might now be raiſed to thwart the happineſs of Don Rimualdo.

The Condè became violently agitated during the peruſal of this billet; ſtill he felt a dread as to his father's determination; but this impediment to his bliſs ſpeedily vaniſhed, for the Marques preſſing the Condè to his boſom, exclaimed:

" Generous boy, thou haſt every way " deſerved the object of thy love, and " ſince ſhe is proved deſerving of thee, " I ſhall not withold my conſent and " bleſſing."

Rimualdo on his knees preſſed the hands of his parent in an ecſtacy; and the Marqueſa entering the ſtudy at this juncture,

juncture, partook of that bliſs which warmed the ſouls of her offspring and her revered Lord.

After the neceſſary term had tranſpired from the death of the Marques di Badajos, the virtuous father Auguſtino attended the Condè Rimualdo and his beloved Conſtanza to the altar in the chapel of the Caſtilio del Lara, where the ſolemn rites were performed in preſence of the old Marques and Marqueſa, and the Duca di Montalvan, who with a ſmile of joy beaming through his tear-clad eyes, gave the moſt lovely and virtuous of ſiſters to the boſom of ſincereſt friendſhip.

The Duca, after a reſidence of ſome months at the Caſtilio del Lara, journeyed to the gloomy manſion of Badajos; where, being ſhortly after joined by the Condè, the Lady Conſtanza, and Arzini, the remains of Angela and her brother

brother were conveyed from the ruined chapel in the foreſt, and interred with all the pomp due to their rank, in the vault of the Montalvan caſtle.

Unclouded happineſs was the attendant of Rimualdo and his love; the Duca di Montalvan was not dazzled by the ſplendour of title and fortune, but ever faithful to his firſt attachment, lived but for friendſhip and eternal peace. Arzini, by the Duca's intereſt, was permitted to quit the Monaſtery, and ſtill bearing the religious garb, his days were ſpent in piety and in the contemplation of that peaceful happineſs which was ever the inmate of the Caſtilio di Montalvan, and the famed manſion of the Lara race.

Lady fair, ſmile ſweetly on their fervent love; the fabric was raiſed upon the rock of uncontaminated virtue; may thine be reared

reared on ſuch a baſis!——Gentle youth, a fervency of paſſion dwells but once within the breaſt of purity: cheriſh the flagrant bloſſom, and ſhould a nipping blaſt wither its beauties and its aromatic ſweets, then live on the fond recollection of the paſt; it will afford a melancholy pleaſure; it will ſoften thee to every thrilling touch of pitying virtue, and elevate thee to ſcenes of bliſs eternal in a world to come—a ſtate of endleſs joy and never-fading felicity.

THE END.

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